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ABSTRACT

While not an instructional panacea, peer involvement in second language learning can provide a rich and productive supplement to the second language classroom experience. It casts learners and teachers into new roles that may lead to a variety of benefits, enriching the total educational and social environment. The systematic use of peer teachers and tutors is a much-publicized practice in contemporary education, but information about it has not been widely disseminated. While peer involvement programs are often largely in response to practical needs, they also closely reflect current views about how a second language is learned best. It is widely applicable for learners of all ages and achievement levels and for a wide variety of instructional purposes. The potential pedagogical benefits include increased individualization, intensified drill practice, and increased communication opportunities. Potential socio-affective benefits include increased motivation, strengthened cross-cultural understanding, self-concept and sense of self-direction, and reduced inhibition. To be successful, peer involvement programs must be thoughtfully planned, carefully structured, and systematically monitored. If this is accomplished, the technique may lead to a new teacher-learner relationship and form the basis for more effective and meaningful second language learning. (MSE)

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# PEER INVOLVEMENT IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

by Stephen J. Gaies

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Prepared by ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics

LANGUAGE IN EDUCATION: Theory and Practice

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[INTRODUCTION]

The last several years have created significant challenges for the language teaching profession, both in the United States and abroad. Growing demands on learners, both children and adults, to acquire proficiency in a second foreign language as a means of economic and social mobility have presented many educational systems with new and unforeseen responsibilities. At the same time, however, many foreign language educators are under growing pressure to defend programs in the face of declining enrollments, dwindling resources, and widespread dismay over the failure of large numbers of students to develop functional ability in a foreign language.

Thus a heightened sense of urgency surrounds the need to make language instruction as effective and meaningful as possible. The response to these new challenges has been positive in a number of ways. Teachers have been receptive to innovative teaching methodologies. New materials and techniques have been designed, many for essentially new language-learning populations. Most of all, perhaps, teachers have more fully recognized the need to adapt and experiment. This more flexible attitude has had an important by-product: It has caused teachers to raise fundamental questions about what goes on in classrooms. Teachers are newly examining their own roles and the roles of their students. They are asking themselves what, as trained professionals, they can best provide for their learners and what learners themselves can contribute to the language-learning process. Often such reassessment of classroom practices has led to efforts to involve learners more actively in their own and other learners' progress. Teachers are no longer simply paying

lip service to the idea of making language instruction more learner centered. Teachers have realized that learners themselves are a largely underused educational resource. Indeed, greater direct involvement of learners in the educational process may be critical to the task of meeting current demands for second and foreign language proficiency. In the classroom, in activities that supplement classroom instruction, and in settings in which formal instruction in a second language is simply not provided, learners are given the opportunity--and in some cases relied on--to assume greater responsibility for their own and their peers' learning. More and more, it appears that peer involvement in second and foreign language learning is an idea whose time has come.

In this volume, the term *peer involvement* is used to designate what are normally referred to as "peer teaching" and "peer tutoring." Although the term is probably easily understood, it might be well to define it clearly from the outset. *Peer involvement* is the use of learrers as models, sources of information, and interactants for each other in such a way that learners assume roles and responsibilities normally taken by a formally trained teacher. The distinction between peer teaching and peer tutoring has to do primarily with the stage at which learners interact with one another. The latter designates an activity that in some fashion follows teacher-led instruction, whereas the former more often refers to the interaction between learners that substitutes for teacher-provided instruction. For the purposes of this volume, observance of this terminological distinction is not necessary, since the various examples of peer interaction will be easily recognized as "teaching" or "tutoring." Thus the more general term, peer involvement, is used.

All too often, the unique benefits that learners can offer each other have been ignored by language educators. In some language-teaching approaches, all but the most controlled interaction among learners has been explicitly discouraged. Now, however, this failure to recognize the contribution that learners can make to each other and to

language teaching is beginning to give way to an active effort to tap the potential of learners as teachers and tutors. Active involvement of learners with each other's progress is increasingly becoming a planned component of language-teaching programs.

The systematic use of peer teachers and tutors is a much-publicized practice in contemporary education, with good reason: According to a 1978 estimate, 10,000 cross-age tutoring programs (with tutors and tutees at different grade levels) had been operating in American public schools during the previous ten years (Gray, 1978). Many bibliographies on the subject are several hundred entries long. Peer tutoring has been the subject of several books and monographs, particularly in the areas of reading and special education. In comparison with other subject areas, second and foreign language teaching may appear to have given little attention to the involvement of peers in the teaching/learning process. This is a somewhat understandable but nonetheless unfortunate misconception.

The view is understandable because reports on peer involvement programs have appeared in a variety of journals of limited circulation, each with its own readership; a great deal of other potentially useful information is even less widely disseminated. This information lag is unfortunate, since dozens of second and foreign language peer involvement programs have been successfully implemented. In many respects, however, the potential for peer involvement in language learning has had to be discovered and rediscovered by individual teachers and program administrators. If the profession were to become more aware of the peer involvement programs that have been developed, it might be willing to implement peer involvement more widely. One of the purposes of this volume, which provides an overview of peer involvement in language learning, is to bring peer involvement to the wider attention of the language-teaching public.

A number of points about peer involvement in language learning are highlighted. First, while peer involvement programs are often in large part a response to practical needs and realities, they also

closely reflect (and in some cases have been specifically based on) current views about how a second or foreign language is best learned. Many of the direct benefits of peer involvement--an exposure to language that is tailored to individual learners' needs and abilities, increased opportunities for genuine communication in the language, the development of interpersonal bonds with a peer role model--are among the ingredients considered necessary for a second or foreign language to be acquired, and they characterize productive language-learning situations. Many of the by-products of participation in a peer involvement program, such as increased motivation, greater cross-cultural understanding, a stronger self-concept and sense of self-direction, and reduced inhibitions, are likewise among the elements that both researchers and practitioners have associated with successful language learners.

A second theme of this overview is that peer involvement is widely applicable. Peer-teaching and -tutoring programs have been successfully designed for young children, for adolescents, and for adults. They have been implemented for learners at all levels of instruction, from beginning to advanced. In many cases, the same program is intended to serve the needs of groups of learners at very different levels of proficiency. Peer involvement is as applicable to foreign language learning as it is to second language learning. It has been used successfully in settings where teachers, materials, and other resources are abundant as well as in settings in which little, and in some cases no, conventional classroom instruction is possible. Peer involvement programs have also been designed for a wide variety of purposes. One basic purpose is to provide an alternative to the "lock-step" nature of classroom instruction; peer involvement programs allow for differential pacing and more individualized activities. In many cases, peer involvement activities essentially provide supplementary practice with material presented initially in the classroom. Another basic purpose of peer involvement is to provide language-learning activities for which the classroom is inappropriate. Many peer involvement

programs are aimed primarily at creating conversation opportunities for learners; such programs enable learners to use the skills they are acquiring in meaningful, goal-directed activity. Other programs have still other, sometimes more specific, purposes, such as training learners to correct their peers' written work and to learn from the corrections of their fellow learners.

In many cases, the pedagogical aspect of a peer involvement program is secondary to the social and psychological effects. Many peer involvement programs in second language learning are extensions of the "buddy" system or the "big brother"/"big sister" system; among their primary goals is the establishment of relationships between second language learners and fluent peers. The importance of providing social and affective support for the young language learner has been widely recognized; it is also at the heart of programs for university students and adults who are paired with a fluent or native speaker. In foreign language learning, learners at different levels of instruction are often paired in a peer involvement program. Along with the many benefits such programs can have for the more advanced learners, there is the benefit for the less advanced learners of interacting regularly with peers whom they might wish to emulate. Such interaction gives the less advanced learners visible evidence that their language-learning goals are in fact attainable, increasing their motivation and determination. In all of the program types mentioned here, the potential for heightening cross-cultural understanding for all participants is widely recognized; in some situations, systematic interaction between a language learner and a native speaker provides an experience that large and often impersonal whole-class instruction cannot.

To be successful, peer involvement programs in language learning must be *thoughtfully planned, carefully structured,* and *systematically monitored.* This basic point is stressed throughout this volume. The hope is that teachers and program administrators who read this volume will want to explore further the possibility of increasing the active involvement

of their own students in each other's work and that, following the models described in this volume, they will adapt what has been done to their own particular needs and resources. New models of peer involvement will thus be created.

[CHAPTER 1 THE CHANGING ROLES OF TEACHERS AND LEARNERS]

Research in language acquisition has not yet succeeded in explaining fully how people acquire a second or foreign language. The field is in its infancy, and many aspects of language acquisition indeed remain difficult to investigate. Several years of intensive investigation, however, have yielded a general understanding of the process of nonprimary language acquisition. In addition, certain myths about what is and is not crucial in learning a second or foreign language have been dispelled.

One such myth, which still has wide currency among the general public, is that all that is necessary for second language learning is sufficient exposure. It is true, of course, that people do not learn a second language without being exposed to it. People cannot wake up one morning in community X speaking the language of community Y. But simple exposure to the language of community Y does not ensure that the language will be acquired. The idea that some individuals "have a knack" for picking up a language also belongs to popular mythology; it is virtually without support from language acquisition research. Unlike viruses, languages are not contagious. A person acquires a language largely as a result of having interacted and communicated meaningfully with more fluent speakers of the new language.

The opportunity to use the language being acquired in order to communicate is, along with several related factors, a basic condition for second or foreign language learning. Among the

related factors listed by Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) are:

- the naturalness of the language to which learners are exposed; that is, the language heard should be directed toward communicating meaning rather than exemplifying a particular linguistic form;

- the availability of concrete referents; that is, the importance, particularly for beginning language learners, of topics that are physically and temporally salient (often called the "here-and-now" principle), so that learners have "visual aids, motor activities, and other ... types of support to help make the meaning of the new language clear" (p. 26); and

- accessibility of target language peer models; in other words, the opportunity to interact with speakers to whom learners will be attentive and from whom learners derive suitable affective support; Dulay, Burt and Krashen (1982) summarize research that suggests a preference for the variety of the language spoken by one's own ethnic group and, what is even more important for the present discussion, a preference for peers over both teachers and parents.

Observation of what typically takes place in the second or foreign language classroom will reveal that in many ways it is far from an ideal environment for language acquisition. This is not to suggest that most teachers would not wish it to be otherwise; nor is it to imply that classrooms do not provide a great deal that is useful. Rather, it is in the nature of large-group instruction under the control of the dominant figure of the teacher that the necessary conditions for language acquisition will generally fail to exist. In some ways, traditional large-group instruction is <u>insufficient</u> for learners' needs; in others, it is <u>inappropriate</u> for language acquisition. These points can be more fully understood through a brief overview of the structure of the conventional language classroom.

## WHOLE-GROUP LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION: THE RULES OF THE GAME

The typical pattern of activity in the language classroom is in many respects little distinguishable from classroom activity in general. It is a pattern that has a long history in education, one that has largely resisted, at least until now, repeated calls for reform. It centers on a stream of verbal behavior, and is founded on a clearly drawn and carefully maintained role distinction between teacher and learner. These participants are assigned the dominant and subordinate roles, respectively, in a relationship that strongly shapes the events in a typical classroom. In most classrooms, this relationship is forcefully expressed by the pattern of classroom activity as well as by the teacher's podium or the familiar image of a teacher standing in front of a group of seated learners. In the language classroom, the relationship may be even more clearly delineated by the linguistic inequality between teacher and learner, which is often a basic fact around which classroom activity revolves. The language classroom can be effectively portrayed by posing and answering the following questions about how verbal interaction is managed.

### Who Talks?

All interaction requires a minimum of two participants. In the language classroom, both teacher and learners participate. The amount of participation differs greatly for the teacher and learners, however; this is one of many effects of the teacher-centered nature of language classroom interaction, as well as classroom interaction in general.

Studies dating as far back as the beginning of this century provide evidence of the disproportionate amount of talking teachers do in classrooms. Whether measured in terms of time, total number of lines of a tape transcript, average length of speaking turn, or in any other way, teachers do about

two-thirds of the talking in a classroom. Little evidence has been accumulated to suggest that efforts to make students more active in the classroom and to have them participate more directly in the learning process have had any significant effect in changing the proportion of their verbal participation in the classroom.

For language teaching, the conclusion is obvious: Learners spend a great deal of time listening to their teacher, and to a much lesser extent to other learners. The larger the class, the more likely it will be that any one learner's speaking time will constitute an insignificant proportion of the total class time.

## About What?

The teacher-centered nature of classroom interaction involves more than the disproportionate amount of talking teachers do. Even more reflective of the dominance of the teacher in the classroom is the typical way in which speaking turns and tasks are managed. Teachers and learners have definite interactional roles; the teaching/learning sequence proceeds by a series of speaking turns initiated by the teacher, as in the following exchange:

T: Now let's go over the antonyms. What's the opposite of <u>light</u>?

L: <u>Dark</u>.

T: Right.

When the teacher says, "Now let's go over the antonyms," a task is being set. The teacher is structuring a particular teaching/learning episode (such sentences have in fact been labeled "structuring moves" (Bellack, Kliebard, Hyman, & Smith, 1966)). In principle, such moves can be made by any of the participants in a verbal exchange. In normal conversation, people constantly structure and restructure the discourse. Sometimes restructuring is explicit, as when someone says, "Let's change the

subject" or, "Not that this has anything to do with it, but ...." Sometimes it is more indirect, as in, "By the way, what do you think about ...?" or "Yes, well, what else happened on your vacation?"

In classrooms, however, task-setting (and the structuring moves that accomplish this) is virtually the exclusive property of teachers. It is teacher who says, "Open your books to page 45" and, "Today we're going to review the irregular past tense forms we've been studying." The reason for this is evident: Setting the task is essentially a matter of topic control. What is talked about in the classroom--and in a larger sense what takes place in the classroom--is traditionally the responsibility of the teacher, who must implement the syllabus of the course. The teacher's job is to mediate between the syllabus and the learners, and this is done most efficiently when the teacher has firm control of the interaction.

Indeed, classroom episodes such as the following, in which a learner ($L_1$) makes a structuring move, are quite infrequent; when they do occur they seem exceptional:

T: But, this is related to the moth but it's usually more beautiful. It has many colors, and it's, it's a very lovely ... insect. Is it an insect? Yeah? O.K., O.K.

$L_1$: You don't know what's butterfly?

$L_2$: I'm sorry, I don't ...

T: Well, now ...

$L_1$: You know that one I could have shown you, you know. I found one in garbage.

T: You found a butterfly in the garbage can?

$L_1$: Yeah.

T: Really?

In this episode, the learner attempts to continue the discussion on the topic of butterflies, a topic that had arisen more or less unexpectedly. Noteworthy are the teacher's attempt to regain control of topic ("Well, now ...") and the learner's refusal to acknowledge it. In many language classrooms, opportunities for learners to vie with teachers for control of topic are limited or nonexistent; even when such opportunities exist, learners generally play by the rules of the language classroom game, which place control of topic firmly with the teacher. Thus, what is talked about is overwhelmingly a matter for the teacher to decide.

## According to What Pattern?

Another way in which interaction in the language classroom corresponds to that of classrooms in general--and also distinguishes interaction in the classroom from what is found in the more natural linguistic environment--lies in the pattern of participation. As mentioned earlier, teachers and learners have clearly different conversational roles. It is the teacher who sets or structures the task. Having done this, the teacher then sets the interactional exchange into motion by making what has been called a "soliciting" or "initiating" move. This move is generally in the form of a question, such as, "What did you do last night?" or, "What is the boy doing in the first picture?" Sometimes the move takes the form of an imperative, as in, "Tell me how many chairs there are in the picture" or, "Repeat after me: 'There are red flowers in the vase.'" In either case, the purpose of this turn is to elicit some verbal response from a learner (or, in cases in which unison responses are part of the teaching procedures, from the learners as a group).

Many researchers have noted the irresistible force of asking questions. In Western culture, questions demand responses; refusing to respond to an initiating move creates considerable social tension. The authority of the teacher adds to the intrinsic power of the question form, and so ques-

tions are an extremely effective means of setting classroom interaction into motion.

The next move is the learner's; the learner must respond to the solicitation. This move is followed by a final speaking turn by the teacher, who reacts to (often by evaluating) the learner's response. Thus, the pattern of participation is as follows: The teacher sets the task and asks a question (or in some other way elicits a learner's verbal participation); the learner makes a response; and the teacher reacts to the learner's response. The following episode reflects this basic pattern of classroom recitation:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| T: | Now, let's review. I'll give you a sentence, and you put it into past tense. | *Structure* |
| | "Mr. Smith eats breakfast." Maria? | *Solicit* |
| L: | "Mr. Smith ate breakfast." | *Response* |
| T: | Good. | *Reaction* |

The final part of the classroom teaching/learning cycle is important to note, since it is one of the most distinctive elements of classroom interaction. In ordinary conversation, one speaker typically reacts to what the other speaker has just said; indeed, it is by this means that conversations are sustained. Speakers indicate their agreement or disagreement with what their partner has just said, or react with surprise or some other emotion to what they have just heard. Often, a reaction can be followed up with another question to find out more about what the other speaker thinks or feels about a topic; other times, a speaker can simply make a reacting move and allow the other speaker to hold the floor. Two things are special about the reacting move in the language classroom. First, it is made almost exclusively by one participant (the teacher). Second, evaluation is based on criteria that are different from those that apply to ordinary conversations. This is so largely as a result of

the goals toward which language instruction is conventionally directed.

## For What Purpose?

The structure of language classroom interaction sketched so far reflects the structure of classrooms in general. Distinguishing the language classroom are the following two goals toward which language teaching has traditionally been directed.

*Maximizing overt practice.* Many language teachers have been trained to stress the development of aural-oral skills. For many, such skills are best developed by maximizing the verbal participation of learners. The more verbally "active" learners are, the more proficient they will become in understanding and producing speech. Thus, the ideal classroom has often been thought to be the one in which the greatest amount of verbal "activity" takes place. Teachers have been admonished to avoid "down" time in classrooms and to ensure that classroom interaction is as "efficient" as possible; that is, involving a rapid succession of speaking turns so that the greatest number of learners can participate the greatest number of times.

*Stressing formal accuracy.* The traditional importance that has been placed on the ability to produce structurally correct utterances in the target language has come increasingly under attack in debates about language-teaching goals and methodology. The problem, say critics, is that in the effort to have learners produce grammatically correct language, classroom interaction is created that is strikingly lacking in real communication of meaning. The questions learners are asked in class serve a very different function from questions people ask outside the classroom. While *referential* questions--that is, questions to which the speaker does not know the answers in advance--predominate in

ordinary language use, *display* questions--that is, questions whose overriding purpose is to have learners produce information already known to the asker--are the dominant question type in the classroom. Such questions make learners attend to the forms they use to respond and require relatively little attention to content. Thus, the reacting moves that teachers make to learners' responses in the classroom are typically directed less to the content (the meaning) of the responses than to their formal (linguistic) accuracy.

## With What Effect on Different Learners?

Anyone who has taught--and indeed anyone who has observed classrooms--has been struck by differences in the way learners respond to the classroom and in the way they participate in classroom activity. Several factors account for the way learners participate in the classroom. The principal factors are the following.

*Motivation*. Much has been made of the importance of attitudes and motivation in language learning. These are difficult variables to measure, and it is this obstacle that has most seriously hindered progress in understanding their role in language learning. Nonetheless, it is safe to assume that students with positive attitudes about the language and the people who speak it, and who have a strong desire to be able to use the language proficiently, are more likely to participate fully in whatever classroom experience with the language is available.

The importance of attitudes for classroom language learning is shown by research such as Gardner's (1968) study of Navajo children learning English. Gardner found that students' attitudes toward English classes reflected their general attitudes about the Anglo community and the degree to which they felt they had access to it. Other studies (see, for example, Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Saville-Troike, 1976; Schumann, 1978) have pointed

up the interplay of parental attitudes, community attitudes, and the attitude of learners toward the target language and community.

Individual students' performance in the language classroom is very often a carry-over of the attitudes that shape their use of the language outside the classroom. Exploratory research by Seliger (1977), for example, suggests that learners who seek out contact with speakers of the target language outside the classroom tend to participate more actively in the classroom.

*Ethnic style.* Learners from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds may respond differently to the traditional large-group instruction that is widely taken for granted. As several studies (Boggs, 1972; Dumont, 1972; Philips, 1972) have suggested, failure to recognize such differences may lead to serious cross-cultural misunderstanding and make the classroom experience even less effective. One recent study (Sato, 1982) has demonstrated quite forcefully that the factor of ethnic style can create a vicious cycle in the classroom. Nineteen Asian and 12 non-Asian students in two intermediate English-as-a-second-language university classes were compared. The Asian students responded to "general solicits" (that is, soliciting moves by the teacher directed to no particular student) significantly less frequently than the non-Asians. Sato (1982) also found that the two teachers called on the Asian learners (that is, made "personal solicits") significantly less often than they called on the non-Asians. It was concluded that the relatively greater reticence of the Asian students to respond to general solicits--to compete for a speaking turn --may have caused their teachers to perceive them as unwilling to participate and so call on them less often. Thus, students who, as a result of their ethnic style, did not avail themselves fully of the opportunity for speaking turns in class and who chose to rely on teacher-allocated turns--personal solicits--were deprived to some degree of even that opportunity for classroom participation.

*Personality factors*. Like attitudes and motivation, personality variables have proven extremely difficult to investigate rigorously. However, empirical evidence supports anecdotal observations of the importance of particular personality traits in language learning. In the language classroom, factors such as self-esteem, inhibition, impulsivity, and self-confidence--to name only a few--correlate to some extent with what learners derive or fail to derive from the traditional language classroom. What has made it especially difficult to reach conclusions about the role of these factors, however, is the nonlinear relationship that seems to exist between many of these variables and classroom performance or achievement.

It is important to recognize that these factors, as well as others (for example, "cognitive style"), cause learners to respond differently to conventional large-group language instruction. They shape learners' participation in the classroom and the perceptions learners develop on the basis of their classroom experience.

## THE LIMITATIONS OF TEACHER-CENTERED, LARGE-GROUP INSTRUCTION

Following is a list of the potential shortcomings, both immediate and longer term, of teacher-centered, whole-group instruction.

### Failure to Provide for the Individual Needs of Learners

The tendency of large-group teaching to proceed at a more or less predetermined rate through course material will fail to accommodate all learners equally well. Some students will lose interest in activities they have already mastered; others will have difficulty keeping up with the rest of the class.

## Inhibiting Effect of Public Nature of Whole-Class Instruction

Classrooms produce what Barnes (1973) calls an "audience effect": The pressure of having to perform in front of a large group of fellow students and the dominating figure of a teacher prevents many students from taking full advantage of the learning opportunities available.

## Decreased Appropriateness of "Language Use" Activities

By their very nature, activities that require students to use the target language for real or simulated communication cannot be controlled in the same way that a teacher can regulate mechanical, "skill-getting" drills. The speed with which students perform communicative language tasks cannot be controlled; nor can the teacher control the ways in which learners will use their acquired knowledge of the language in communicative activities. Furthermore, the public nature of classrooms already mentioned tends to make any attempt at communication inauthentic; students tend to feel that they are playing at communication, rather than actually using the language purposefully.

## Insufficient Opportunity to Learn to Manage Discourse

In her review of the implications of discourse analysis for classroom teaching, Kramsch (1981) summarizes the findings of several critics of conventional classroom instruction as follows: In the classroom, learners have limited opportunities to engage in "natural" discourse. Conversational fluency requires more than an ability to respond to questions and occasionally to report or describe information. It requires competence in the management of discourse (Candlin, 1976). Students have to learn to signal a desire for a speaking turn, to

extend discussion of a topic or to change topics, to clarify meaning, to repair conversational breakdowns, and to comment on a previous speaker's turn. In addition, students must learn to manage discourse in ways that speakers of the target language will find acceptable.

## Insufficient Opportunity of Learners to Manage Their Own Learning

At some point, classroom instruction in a language must end, and students must be able to make further progress on their own. Teachers recognize this fact; it is why a primary overall goal of education is to help students "learn how to learn."

In reality, however, whole-group, teacher-centered instruction often produces quite a different effect. Allwright (1979) cited the following ways in which the conventional second or foreign language classroom prevents learners from taking adequate responsibility for their own learning.

*Frustration.* Often learners are prevented from discovering what they believe will best enhance their own learning. Students have different learning styles, and unless opportunities exist for learners and their teacher to discover how learning can best be managed, many learners will eventually feel frustrated.

*Spoon-feeding.* This practice can be roughly described as "doing for learners what they could more profitably do for themselves" (pp. 112-13). For example, "it is possible to frustrate a learner by providing a rule or an explanation when the learner really believes ... that he or she will learn best by being given an opportunity to work it out independently" (p. 110). The problem of spoon-feeding goes beyond this, however. In presenting the language in small doses, by focusing learners' attention on form rather than on meaning, and by

judging learner performance primarily (if not exclusively) on the criterion of formal accuracy, large-group, teacher-centered instruction can create the illusion that what learners will need to be able to do with the language outside the classroom is being adequately dealt with in the classroom. This problem may be particularly acute for younger foreign language learners, who in most cases will not have access to the target community and who therefore have little way of knowing what the demands of normal language use are.

*Demoralization.* A learner whose expectations become lower than his or her abilities would otherwise indicate is said to be demoralized. Demoralization is easily bred in learners who believe that their potential contribution to their own and others' learning is undervalued.

*Dependence-breeding.* Another effect of teacher-centered instruction is dependence on the teacher as an "expert." This effect is insidious, since everything a teacher may do to maintain high morale in class, to sustain student interest, and to make material easily understood may also cause learners to become, unknowingly, "so dependent on the teacher that, without him (i.e., in 'real-life') they are, literally, helpless, like package tour customers who have lost their [tour guide]" (p. 12).

## PATTERNS OF PEER INVOLVEMENT

There is almost endless variety in peer involvement programs. Because peer teaching and tutoring programs are normally developed to meet specific needs of particular students in a particular setting, no two peer involvement programs are ever exactly the same. Nonetheless basic models

or patterns of peer involvement in education can be identified.

A basic distinction involves the relative age or grade level of the peer participants. "Same-age" programs are those in which tutors and tutees are at the same grade level. A basic pattern of same-age tutoring is *intraclass tutoring*,[1] which involves students assisting one another within their own class. In a larger program, students in one class might work with students from another class at the same level.

Several variations of the intraclass pattern are possible; each has particular advantages for different situations:

- students in an intraclass program may be randomly paired or assigned to groups;

- students may be allowed to select individual partners to work with or form small groups by themselves; or

- students may be paired or assigned to groups according to certain criteria. Sex, race, personality, socioeconomic level, and achievement level are all variables on which pairing and grouping procedures have been based (for example, high-achieving students may be paired with students with learning difficulties, or students with different personality traits may be deliberately paired).

The other basic type of peer teaching and tutoring is the "cross-age" program. In such programs, tutors and tutees are at different grade levels; the age difference between tutors and tutees may range from one to several years.

One of the most common patterns of cross-age peer involvement is *intergrade tutoring*. One example of intergrade tutoring is when upper-grade elementary students serve as tutors for students in the primary grades. Although there are exceptions, intergrade tutoring programs usually involve tutors

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[1] The terms used here are taken from Melargno (1976).

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at least three years older (three grade levels above) their tutees.

In *interschool tutoring*, learners at the junior or senior high school level may work with elementary-level students. The age differential between tutors and tutees in this type of program is often no greater than in intergrade tutoring. Interschool tutoring, however, often presents more challenging practical difficulties than intergrade programs, since it often involves students in different buildings with different daily schedules.

In some interschool programs, students from different educational systems may be involved in a peer teaching or tutoring project. In a program (Martin & Berka, 1980) described later in this volume (see pp. 72-73), bilingual Spanish-English undergraduate students in science and engineering taught science to Spanish-dominant elementary students (K-8) enrolled in a transitional bilingual educational program.

A third basic pattern of cross-age peer involvement is *informal tutoring*, in which older students supervise or participate with younger students in out-of-classroom activities. This kind of peer involvement often grows out of intergrade tutoring, but it need not. Examples of informal tutoring are the "buddy system" or "big brother"/"big sister" programs that many schools have developed to provide for students with social, behavioral, or other nonacademic difficulties.

Peer involvement in language learning can be described to some extent, but not completely, in terms of these basic patterns. This statement is particularly true for second language learning because learning a second language is not the same as learning content subjects. In other subject areas, skills can be roughly correlated with grade level: Sixth graders tend to have greater skill in mathematics than third graders do. Proficiency in a nonnative language, however, is not directly connected with age (grade level) to the same extent. While students at any grade level may differ considerably in their academic ability, the difference is generally not so great as the difference between

a native speaker of a language and a learner of the same age with limited proficiency in the language.

As a result, peer involvement programs in language learning should consider both the age of participants and their level of proficiency. A peer tutoring program in which native speakers tutor second language learner age peers is not identical to same-age tutoring programs in content areas. Conversely, second language classes are often made up of learners of different ages, and the in-class peer involvement activities that are designed should be based more on the shared level of proficiency of the students than on age differences among them. For these reasons and others, in describing basic patterns of peer involvement in second and foreign language learning, the terms "same-level" and "cross-level" ("level" referring to proficiency in the target language) are used.

Table 1.1 lists patterns of peer involvement in second and foreign language learning and explains how the various patterns should be understood.

| | |
|---|---|
| **SAME-LEVEL** | |
| Intraclass (designed for use within a second or foreign language classroom; all participants are learning the same target language and are at about the same level of proficiency.) | NNS-NNS |
| **CROSS-LEVEL** | |
| Same age (fluent speakers of the target language serve as peer teachers or tutors for age peers with limited proficiency in the language; an example for second language learning is the use of peer tutors with students of limited proficiency who have been mainstreamed, while in foreign language learning the use of international students as peer tutors is an example.) | NS-NNS |
| Intergrade (older, generally more proficient students teach or tutor younger learners.) | NNS-NNS or NS-NNS |
| Reciprocal (two groups of learners, each fluent in one language and each with limited proficiency in the language of the other group, serve alternately as peer teachers or tutors for students in the other group.) | NNS-NS |
| "Informal" (more fluent, generally older, learners engage in activities with less fluent learners that are primarily intended to help the less proficient learner integrate socially and academically into a school setting; less explicitly built around language development activities.) | NNS-NNS or NS-NNS |

Table 1.1. Peer involvement patterns in second and foreign language learning.

*Note:* NS = native or fluent speaker; NNS = learner.

[CHAPTER 2 PEER INVOLVEMENT IN THE CLASSROOM]

In this chapter, same-level, intraclass peer involvement activities are examined. These activities, for students in the same classroom and at the same level of instruction, are relatively easy to design and involve considerably less procedural planning than cross-level peer involvement.

Some activities can be used for peer teaching or tutoring in the traditional sense, such as having students serve as "respondents, informed sources or monitors" (Kohn & Vajda, 1975) for each other. In such *peer-mediated* activities, one or more students take on a role that is ordinarily assumed by the teacher. More advanced students--or students who have learned a particular teaching point especially well--work in pairs or small groups with less advanced students. Another possibility is for pairs of students to alternate as "teacher" and "learner." Other activities can be more suitably thought of as opportunities for students to learn cooperatively through their participation in a peer-directed activity. Through students' participation in activities such as games and problem-solving tasks, and through efforts to communicate meaning through the target language, learning can take place despite the absence of a "teacher" or surrogate.

Peer involvement activities in the second or foreign language classroom can also be categorized according to the role they play in the overall classroom teaching and learning process. Some are intended for *periodic* use in the classroom, as an occasional change of pace or supplement to frontal, teacher-directed activity. Others are *ongoing* in

nature and are a central feature of classroom organization and the classroom learning process. In both cases, but particularly in the event that peer involvement activities will be used extensively in the classroom, these activities offer important benefits; at the same time, however, they demand that teachers reconcile themselves to playing a somewhat different role than they are normally accustomed to in whole-class activity under their immediate direction.

Even when they constitute a modest proportion of overall classroom activity, periodic peer teaching and tutoring activities can provide a number of benefits. All students enjoy variety in the classroom, and the opportunity to interact with peers can relieve the monotony of whole-class, teacher-directed work. Even the most inspirational of teachers can become a numbing force in the classroom if students are exposed to nothing other than teacher-led drills and exercises. In addition, there will inevitably be times when, despite the obvious need for additional practice, teachers will feel compelled to move on to new material; additional practice that whole-class teaching cannot provide economically can often be derived much more efficiently from pair and small-group work. Finally, peer-led activities, even if used only occasionally, may be the best vehicle for stimulating communication in the target language; communicating with peers is a natural--more "authentic" --setting for the use of language, and students who are reluctant to perform in front of an entire classroom may be quite willing to express themselves to a fellow language learner.

As an integral part of second or foreign language classroom activity, peer teaching and tutoring provide these same benefits, along with other advantages. Learners come to rely on their peers and develop a sense of responsibility to their peer partners or group. Pair and group activities can help wean learners from excessive dependence on the teacher. Some activities, such as peer correction and proofreading, can develop types of abilities and

awareness that learners all too often abdicate to the teacher.

It must be pointed out, however, that the very nature of peer involvement activities makes it difficult--and in many cases impossible--for teachers to monitor everything that takes place in the classroom. Much of the initial resistance of teachers to learner-directed work stems from the fear of losing control of the classroom. Nothing seems to express this general fear better than the frequent criticism that peer-led activity will generate too many errors and will produce too much mislearning.

This criticism is not totally invalid, but it is much less accurate than many teachers might suspect. First of all, errors are not so universally dealt with in teacher-centered instruction as many teachers believe; no teacher can simultaneously monitor the performance of each of 30 or more students in unison work; furthermore, research has shown that even when teachers detect errors, they do not always choose to treat them. Most error treatment in large-group instruction is selective; teachers use a large number of unconscious criteria to decide what errors to correct and what errors to ignore. Thus, to characterize teacher-directed instruction as activity in which errors are uniformly dealt with, and peer-led activity as fertile ground for the production and spread of incorrect performance, is to create a false dichotomy.

A second point to be made in this regard is that many effective peer-directed activities are of a highly controlled nature. One widely used form of peer tutoring in the classroom is pair work in which a somewhat more proficient student drills a less proficient learner. The "tutor" leads the "tutee" in exercises for which answers are provided. The more proficient learner in each pair, then, can provide for the less proficient learner precisely what the teacher provides, but in a more intensive form than any one teacher can possibly provide to each of a dozen or more students who need focused, manipulative practice.

For those more communicative activities in which errors are more likely to occur and in which

identification and treatment of errors are more difficult, the production of errors and breakdowns in communication must be accepted by teachers as an inevitable consequence of learners' attempts to use the language. This is not to say that concern for formal accuracy should be entirely ignored; as has recently been recognized (see, for example, Higgs & Clifford, 1982), attention must be given to both fluency *and* accuracy in the classroom. Nonetheless, the acceptance of communicative proficiency as a goal of language classroom instruction entails an acceptance on the part of teachers that students' attempts to use their developing language ability cannot take place without occasional, and sometimes frequent, errors. This fact, however, is not unique to peer-led activity; it is a product of the kind of activity in which students are involved, and much less the result of a teacher's presence or absence.

In summary, peer involvement in the classroom has the following advantages:

- It can provide increased practice opportunities. Students working in pairs or groups can receive more intense practice with the language than students who must compete for practice opportunities in teacher-directed drill work;

- It is a time-efficient means of exposing students to activities in which the teacher does not play an indispensable role;

- It is a more appropriate format for many activities involving communication in the language; there is, as Russo (1983) puts it, an "inherent communication bias of grouping"; and

- It fosters students' reliance on themselves and other learners and thus prepares students for the responsibilities in language development that they will confront in the community outside the classroom.

In the next section, sample activities that encourage peer involvement are discussed. Activi-

ties are divided into three categories: pair work, small-group work, and activities in which one or more students interact with the rest of the class.

It should be pointed out that for reasons of space, only a few sample activities are suggested for each category. These are to be regarded as illustrative of what can be done; by no means do they exhaust the range of possibilities. In addition, the focus is, with some exceptions, on peer involvement activities that can be used as is or adapted to lower levels of instruction, since it is with beginning and lower-intermediate students that teachers tend to rely on frontal, whole-class instruction and fail to consider the possibility of peer-mediated, peer-directed activity.

## PAIR WORK

Pair work can be a highly effective format for intensive practice with specific points of grammar and vocabulary. When it is done in the classroom, it is most productive when done for short periods of time. For example, students might be paired for a few minutes at the beginning of a class to drill each other on material covered in the previous lesson or to review dialogues. The same pairings can be kept for a period of time, or students can have a new partner for each class according to a rotation system.

The Dyad Learning Program (Pack, 1977) is a set of materials for ESL students that suggests how peer tutoring can be used in conjunction with tightly controlled, teacher-determined goals and activities for intensive work in grammar. These materials can be put to a number of different uses: They can be used in class by all students in the early stages of instruction, they can be used by students who need remedial, precommunicative practice with the basic grammatical elements of English, or they can be used for out-of-class reinforcement (in the latter case,

providing a much more interactive alternative to language lab drill).

The materials focus on three areas of difficulty for ESL learners: prepositions, pronouns and determiners, and verb choices and forms. Each of these areas (which were identified as problem areas by an analysis of errors in ESL students' compositions) is treated in a separate volume. Each volume has two parts: a set of multiple-choice completion exercises without answers--the "student's" or tutee's materials--and a similar set of exercises with answers provided--the tutor's part. Each exercise is designed to have students choose from among two to six potentially confusing choices. As the tutee proceeds through each exercise, the tutor provides immediate feedback on the answers given. Each text is divided into groups of exercises; before moving on to the next group, the tutee must be able to complete exercises in the previous group without error.

The materials were designed to be used by pairs of students who would alternate in the roles of tutor and tutee, but they could not be used equally well in pairings in which students play either the role of tutor or the role of tutee.

Materials similar to those in the Dyad Learning Program can be used successfully in pair work to provide students with practice in producing correct forms. Pair work is also effective for activities in which learners must relate form to meaning; that is, in activities in which, given directions about what to produce, students must produce a meaningful and intelligible utterance.

"Cued dialogues" are an example of an activity at this stage of instruction for which pair work is an effective format. Each learner in a pair is given a card on which instructions are written for the lines that learner will produce in a dialogue (role cards can be produced with options at several points, so that learners can make choices that add an element of originality to each cued dialogue that a pair of students produces). An example of a cued dialogue is provided in Table 2.1.

| Student 1 | Student 2 |
|---|---|
| You meet Student 2 in a store. | You meet Student 1 in a store. |
| 1: Greet Student 2. | 1: |
| 2: | 2: Greet Student 1. Ask how he/she is. |
| 1: Tell Student 2 you are fine (O.K.). Ask Student 2 if he/she has time to go for a cup of coffee (take a walk in the park, go to X's house). | 1: |
| 2: | 2: Say you would like to (are sorry), but you have some other errands to do (have to be home in a few minutes, must meet your brother/sister in five minutes). Ask if Student 1 is free this evening. |
| 1: Say that you are planning to study. Ask Student 1 if he/she would like to study with you. | 1: |
| 2: | 2: Say that's a good idea. Tell Student 1 you'll call after dinner. |
| 1: Agree with Student 1's plans. | |

Table 2.1. Cued dialogue.

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Cued or directed dialogues such as this are an excellent preparation for more open-ended dialogues and role plays. Littlewood (1981, p. 14) provides an example of a cued dialogue in which each learner is given communicative functions to express, but relatively little in terms of specific content (see Table 2.2).

| Partner A | Partner B |
|---|---|
| You meet B in the street. | You meet A in the street. |
| A: Greet B. | A: |
| B: | B: Greet A. |
| A: Ask where B is going. | A: |
| B: | B: Say you are going for a walk. |
| A: Suggest somewhere to go together. | A: |
| B: | B: Reject A's suggestion. Make a different suggestion. |
| A: Accept B's suggestion. | A: |
| B: | B: Express pleasure. |

Table 2.2. Cued dialogue with minimal specific content.

Pair work is also an effective format for communication activities. The essence of such activities is that "the teacher structures the situation so that learners have to overcome an information gap or solve a problem" (Littlewood, 1981, p. 22). The learners' task is to use what target language abilities they possess to communicate meanings, and the success of their efforts will be reflected by their ability to achieve the goal of the task.

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Identifying a Member of a Set

The first example of a communication activity suitable for pair work is when one learner is given a set of pictures that are similar in content, but differ from one another in one or more details, as in Figure 2.1. In the drawings, the color of the curtains, the number of chairs, and the position of the radio combine to create a set of different scenes.

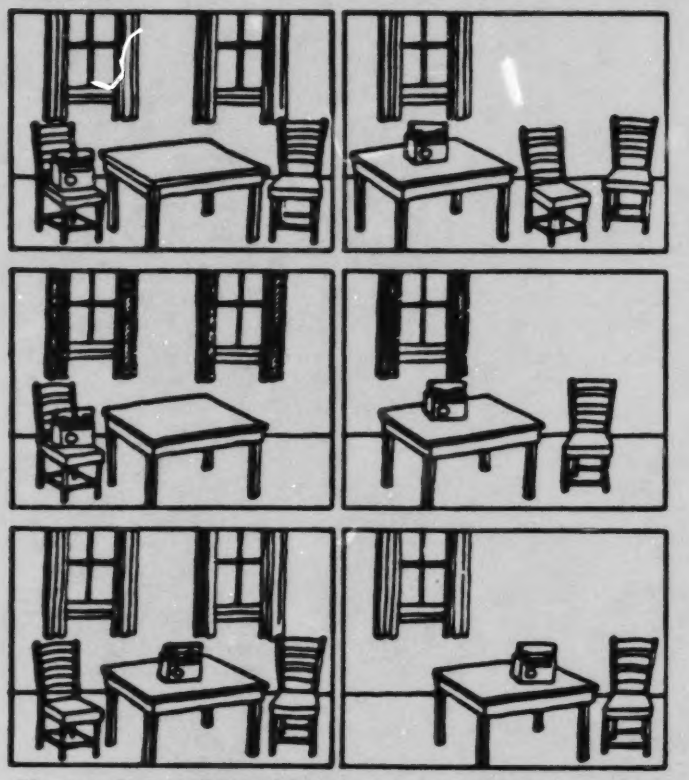

Figure 2.1. Identifying a member of a set.

*Note.* From *Communicative Language Teaching--An Introduction* (p. 23) by W. Littlewood, 1981, Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press. Copyright © 1981 by Cambridge University Press. Reprinted by permission.

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Another learner is given a duplicate of one of the pictures and is instructed not to disclose any information about the picture to his or her partner until the activity begins. Then, the second learner may offer information only in response to questions from the first learner, whose task it is to identify which of the drawings the second learner has. The first learner may be instructed to ask only "yes/no" questions to make the task more challenging. In fact, depending on the kind of questions that are allowed, this activity can be designed for students of many different levels of language instruction.

Recreating Patterns

Each of two learners has a checkerboard consisting of nine squares (three by three). Each learner has a set of objects, the words for which they do not know in the target language. One learner must choose nine objects and place them, one to a square, on the checkerboard. The learner must then communicate to his or her partner, who cannot see the first learner's checkerboard, which object to place in which square. The second learner is allowed to ask questions and to provide any feedback necessary to indicate that he or she has not understood what to do. The goal of the task is to have the second learner place the objects on his or her checkerboard in exactly the same fashion as the first learner has done.

There are many possible variations on this activity, of course. As described, the activity demands that learners use their ability to express spatial relationships (including prepositions). A picture that serves as a background setting can also be used as a game board. For less advanced learners, the objects can consist of nothing more than different basic shapes of different colors and can provide practice in identifying objects by shape and color. When learners must communicate information about objects they do not know the words for (and these can be simple objects such as a hairpin, a seashell, a plastic worm, a luggage tag, etc.), they

must put their target language ability to use to describe the object by paraphrase or circumlocution; this can provide a convincing demonstration for learners of the need to make vocabulary expansion an important part of their language-learning agenda.

## Pooling Information

A communication task that demands more equal communication on the part of the two participants--that is, in which each participant must both request and furnish information--is illustrated by the map-reading exercise reproduced in Figure 2.2. Again, the task can be varied in difficulty by increasing or decreasing the amount of information shared by the two participants at the beginning of the task.

Mention should be made of the value of pair work outside the classroom. Particularly for activities that require more time than a teacher may be willing to spend in the classroom, pair work can be useful in encouraging students to continue their language learning efforts outside the classroom. The possibilities range from practice with tightly controlled materials or exercises created by the teacher to learner-selected activities (games such as "Hangman" or lotto can be very useful for skill-building in spelling and vocabulary). One way to implement student-structured pair work is to encourage students to form study couples or to assist students in selecting a peer to work with over the course of a semester (Gaudiani, 1981). Students paired on the basis of similar interests or some other factor (for example, in ESL classes, on the basis of different native language backgrounds) and working together on a sustained basis gain a sense of responsibility of each for the other and are encouraged to use the target language for communication. As Gaudiani (1981) has pointed out, participation in pair work of this sort is not likely to be radically new for most students; rather, it is a matter of the teacher overtly encouraging students to do on a more sustained basis what many students do occasionally anyway.

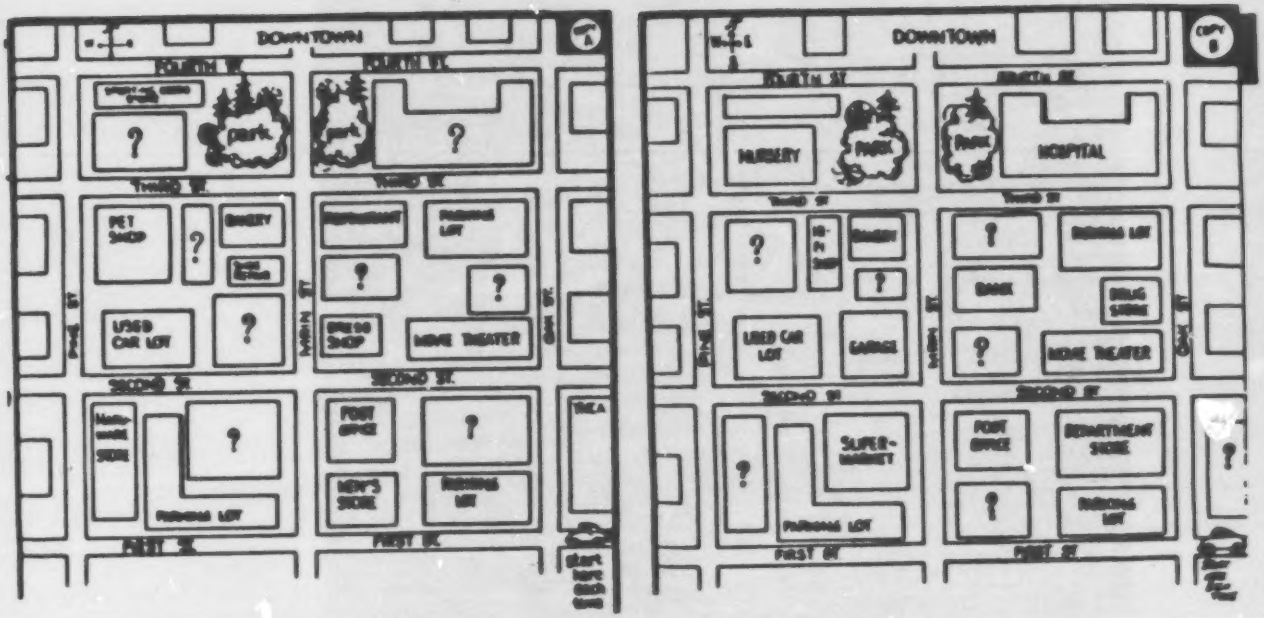


Figure 2.2. Map-reading exercise. The instructions say, "You and your partner have different maps. ... Ask your partner how to get to the [following] places" [for partner with Copy A: the hospital, the garage, the supermarket, etc.; for partner with Copy B: the sporting goods store, the dress shop, the hardware store, etc.].

*Note.* From *Communication-Starters* (pp. 41, 43) by J.W.B. Olsen, 1977, Hayward, CA: The Alemany Press. Copyright © 1977 by Janus/Alemany. Reprinted by permission of the publisher and the author.

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## SMALL-GROUP WORK

Small-group work is recommended by virtually all recent handbooks and methodology texts for language teachers. The interest is justified, because the small-group format is well suited to a range of activities from controlled precommunicative practice to decontrolled communicative activity.

Many exercises and tasks suitable for pair work can be adapted to a small-group setting. In addition, some activities are uniquely appropriate for groups of three or more students. These include the following.

### Personalized Questions and Interviews

"Conversation cards" and "interview cards," described by Bonin and Birckbichler (1975), enable small groups of students to use their developing language proficiency to talk about themselves and to share their interests, feelings, opinions, and experiences with fellow students. They are most appropriately used as an intermediate stage between controlled question-answer activities typical of whole-class instruction and unstructured activities in which students must both formulate and answer questions entirely by themselves.

Conversation cards are used:

> in conjunction with materials in the textbook. They exploit either a topic and its related vocabulary (e.g., sports) or a grammatical concept ... or a combination of both. For a given topic, whether lexical or grammatical, three cards have been prepared, each containing five to ten questions. For each subject, an attempt is made to have three different sets of questions on the same topic, and to approximate as closely as possible the natural progression of a conversation. No instructions are given about the content



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of the answer so that students can give either general or personal answers. (pp. 22-23)

These "personalized" questions can be presented in different formats depending on the ability level of the students. For beginning students, they may be posed as direct questions--*What time do you get up on weekdays?*, *What do you eat for breakfast?*, *What time do you leave for school?*, *What do you like to eat for lunch?*, and so forth; for more advanced students, they can appear on the conversation cards as directed dialogue--*Ask your conversation partner when he/she gets up on weekdays*, and so on. For even more advanced students, the questions can be more elaborate; students must not only answer a question, but must also explain or justify their answer. For example, for an activity focusing on *if*-clauses, students can be told to *Ask your partner what he/she would do if he/she had $10,000 dollars and why* or *Ask your partner what he/she would change if he/she could change his/her personality and why*.

Students do the activity in groups of three. One student asks another student a question, the second student answers, and the third student listens and provides assistance or comments on the answer. Students in each group take turns asking, answering, and commenting on answers. In classes in which a number of students are considerably ahead of the others, the more proficient students could be used primarily as monitors for this activity; that is, they can play the role of listening to and commenting on (correcting) the efforts of the other students.

Interview cards, unlike conversation cards, are not tied to any particular text material and do not focus on manipulative control of specific items of grammar or vocabulary. Instead, they are used to enable students to elicit information about their peers--their personal background and interests. As with conversation cards, the nature of the directions given to students varies with their ability. For beginning students, questions may be provided in precisely the form they should be asked, for

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example, *What's your name?*, *How old are you?*, *What is your address?*, and so on. At an intermediate level, directions could take the form of: *Ask X what his/her name is*, *Ask X how old he/she is*, *Ask X what his/her address is*, and so on. More advanced students might simply be given the nature of the information to be obtained: *Ask X his/her name, age, address*, etc.

Conversation and interview cards provide students with the opportunity to do in small groups--in a more authentic setting than the whole class--what is often done under the control of the teacher. The peer-led format suggested by Bonin and Birckbichler (1975) maximizes practice opportunities and encourages learner participation in asking for, providing, and judging the comprehensibility of information.

Sentence-Chaining and Expansion

Once learners have learned to produce particular grammatical forms, practice can be extended to the production of original sentences. In sentence-chaining, the group starts with a model sentence such as *At six-thirty, Mary woke up*. Each member of the group must produce a sentence similar in form that continues to narrate the events of the day, such as: *At seven, she had breakfast*, *At eight, she went to school*, *At noon, she had lunch*, and so on. If desired, the activity can be based on information provided to the group, such as a table, chart, or set of pictures.

In sentence expansion, the group must start with a model sentence and expand it. Thus, given the sentence *He went to the store to buy some eggs*, each student must add one additional item: *He went to the store to buy some eggs and a bottle of milk*, *He went to the store to buy some eggs, a bottle of milk, and five pounds of sugar*, and so forth. Sentence expansion is useful for reinforcing new vocabulary (particulary vocabulary related to the same domain) and developing students' short-term memory. A game-like atmosphere is created when each group

attempts to produce the longest (but grammatically accurate) sentence in the class.

Reconstructing Sequences

A problem-solving activity that can be used in group work is the "strip story," which involves having each student in the group possess information that no one else in the group has, thus generating goal-directed communication (Gibson, 1975):

> The teacher selects a story or anecdote which has the same number of sentences as there are students. Simple sentences can be combined or more complex ones broken up to make the appropriate number of sentences. The sentences are typed and dittoed with extra space between each sentence. One copy is cut into strips, with one sentence on each strip. In class the sentences are distributed at random to the students, who are then asked to memorize their sentences.... Students are not allowed to write anything down or compare sentences at this time. After the sentences are memorized, the strips are thrown away.... The idea is to have each student become the sole source of one piece of information. Being the only source of his sentence will force each student to speak at least once. Thus everyone is required to participate in order to solve the problem. Next the students are instructed to find out exactly what the story is without writing anything down. (p. 150)

The key to this activity is that the group's success in reconstructing the story depends on the contribution of each member. This is why students are not allowed to retain the strips; without the written sentences, no single student can complete the task for the whole group, and each member of the

group must work to provide information and to elicit information from the others.

## Decision Making

Many of the interactions of daily life involve problems that have more than one possible solution. Given certain information, a group of individuals must work to find a solution that is, to the extent possible, satisfactory to all.

For more advanced students, a number of communication tasks simulate "real-life" communication in this way. These are problem-solving tasks in which learners, all presented with the same information, must discuss the merits of various alternatives and reach a group decision. According to Berns (1984), activities of this kind are becoming increasingly popular in language classes for very good reasons:

> They respond to the need for learner-centered activities, but do more than that. They also provide the opportunity for learners to express meaning, using the meaning potential they have developed up to that time, about a specified content. Thus, the ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions of language come together ... learners have to focus on meaning and have to contend with the possibility of not getting their meaning across. In addition, the unpredictability of discourse and the variable relationship between form and function are accounted .... Because of these features, [a problem-solving] exercise, if done without teacher intervention to correct errors (except those that are an obstacle to the expression of meaning), provides for interaction among students to an optimal degree. (p. 19)

Examples of small-group discussion and decision-making activities are given in Figures 2.3-5. The first (Fig. 2.3) provides specific directions for discussion (the entire unit also contains a "written reaction" section, in which students record the conclusions of their discussion and do two other exercises related to the topic, and a "vocabulary" section, in which key lexical items are defined). The second (Fig. 2.4) is less structured; students are simply presented with information and instructed to list the reasons for and against doing the heart transplant on each of the six potential recipients.

Activities such as "Who gets the heart?" can be particularly effective in ESL classes, where students of various cultural backgrounds can offer different perspectives and values. Care must be taken by the teacher, however, not to present an activity of this kind to students whose target language ability is insufficient to allow them to discuss the issue.

For lower-level students, small-group discussion more narrowly focused on specific points of grammar and vocabulary can be devised. The group task in Figure 2.5 comes from a unit in a textbook (designed for first-year secondary school Yugoslav learners of English) in which comparative and superlative forms of adverbs and adjectives, the use of modals to make suggestions and recommendations, and the communicative functions of making comparisons, making suggestions and justifying recommendations are the main teaching points. This exercise, appropriate for lower-intermediate and intermediate students, illustrates how small-group tasks can be developed to provide students with the opportunity to use what they have learned in whole-class instruction in a semicontrolled communicative activity.

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While you are driving alone through the desert on vacation, your camper breaks down late in the afternoon, and you cannot fix it. You discover that the road you are traveling on is closed to traffic. There is little hope of anyone driving by to help you. There are no telephones nearby.

Your best solution is to walk back to a service station which you remember passing. You calculate that you have driven about one hour and fifteen minutes at an average speed of eighty kilometers (fifty miles) per hour. You will have to travel only at night because of the intense heat and burning sun.

The camper has the following items in it:

- roll of toilet paper
- mess kit
- dozen eggs
- box of powdered milk
- canteen of water
- sleeping bag
- book of matches
- dozen flares
- portable radio
- wool blanket
- can of gas
- first-aid kit
- large utility knife
- insect repellent
- tent
- flare gun
- flashlight
- thermos of hot coffee
- camping stove
- compass
- fresh vegetables
- beach umbrella
- fresh fruit
- canned food
- can opener

## ORAL INTERACTION

1 Because of the limitations of space and weight, you can only carry five items.

a. Decide which five items to take.

b. Arrange these five items in order of importance.

2 Most of the items in the camper can fit into two categories: (1) camping gear, and (2) food. Put these items into their categories.

3 Calculate the distance and the approximate amount of time needed to walk that distance.

4 What other alternatives are there for solving this situation, other than walking back to the service station?

5 Can you think of any items missing from the list that you might need? Name them.

Figure 2.3. Small-group discussion activity.

*Note.* From *React Interact: Situations for Communication* (p. 23) by D.R.H. Byrd and I. Clemente-Cabetas, 1980, New York: Regents. Copyright © 1980 by Regents Publishing Company, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

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## Unit 8 Who Gets the Heart?

Read: You are members of the heart transplant surgery team at a university hospital in Washington, D.C. At the moment, you have six patients who desperately need a transplant, if they are to have any chance of living. All six patients are classified as "critically ill," and could die at any time.

You have just received the news that the heart of a 16-year-old boy, who was killed in an auto accident, has become available for transplantation. Speed is extremely important as you decide which of the following patients is to receive the heart: not only might one of the patients die, but also the donor heart will soon begin to deteriorate.

Consider: (1) The age and sex of the donor has no relationship to the age and sex of the recipient. In other words, the heart of the 16-year-old boy would work well in a 50-year-old woman. (2) Rank the patients in order: 1--first to receive, 6--last to receive.

Decide:

Patients:

1. Jonas Kasperak, male, age 55. Mr. Kasperak is employed as a steelworker. He and his 47-year-old unemployed wife have seven children (ages 8-22).
Reasons he should receive the heart:_____
Reasons he should not receive the heart:_____
Conclusion of heart transplant team:_____

2. Elena Rodriguez, female, age 31. Ms. Rodriguez sings first soprano in the Washington Metropolitan Opera. She is divorced and has two children (ages 2 and 3).
Reasons she should receive the heart:_____
Reasons she should not receive the heart:_____
Conclusion of heart transplant team:_____

3. Franklin Johns, male, age 42. Mr. Johns, a research scientist at George Washington University, is the leading authority in the world on bacteriological diseases. He is unmarried.
Reasons he should receive the heart:_____
Reasons he should not receive the heart:_____
Conclusion of heart transplant team:_____

4. Carlos Wahnon, male, age 10. Carlos, the son of the Venezuelan Ambassador, is a student in an elementary school. When he grows up, he wants to be a doctor.
Reasons he should receive the heart:_____
Reasons he should not receive the heart:_____
Conclusion of heart transplant team:_____

5. F. Lincoln Bradley, male, age 65. Mr. Bradley is the Vice President of the U.S. He is the father of three grown children, and the grandfather of five.
Reasons he should receive the heart:_____
Reasons he should not receive the heart:_____
Conclusion of heart transplant team:_____

6. Helen Jackson, female, age 39. Ms. Jackson, a recent widow, is unemployed and on welfare. She has three children (ages 4, 8, 10).
Reasons she should receive the heart:_____
Reasons she should not receive the heart:_____
Conclusion of heart transplant team:_____

**Figure 2.4. Small-group decision-making activity.**

*Note.* From *The Non-Stop Discussion Workbook* (pp. 31-33) by G. Rooks, 1981, Rowley, Mass.: Newbury House. Copyright © 1981 by Newbury House Publishers, Inc. Reprinted by permission.

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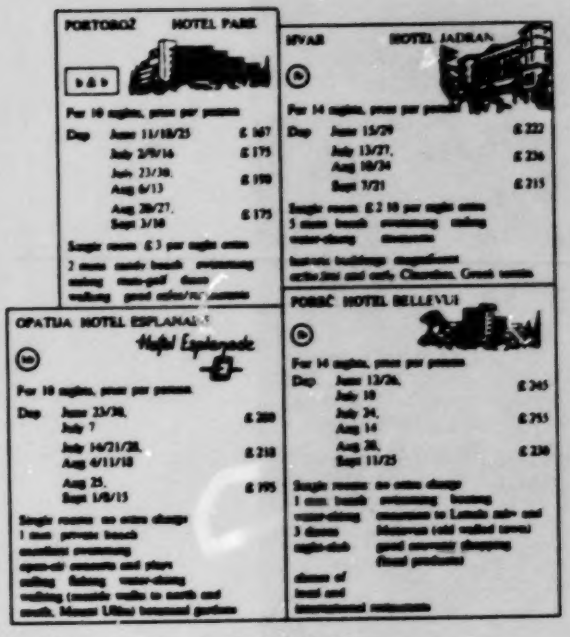

PORTOROŽ HOTEL PARK

For 10 nights, prices per person

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dep | June 11/18/25 | £ 167 |
| | July 2/9/16 | £ 175 |
| | July 23/30, Aug 6/13 | £ 199 |
| | Aug 20/27, Sept 3/10 | £ 175 |

Single room £3 per night extra

2 mins inside beach overlooking walking town-golf shops walking good sailing/water contacts

HVAR HOTEL JADRAN

For 14 nights, prices per person

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dep | June 15/29 | £ 222 |
| | July 13/27, Aug 10/24 | £ 236 |
| | Sept 7/21 | £ 215 |

Single room £2 10 per night extra

5 mins beach overlooking sailing water-skiing discos

Interesting buildings magnificent architecture and early Christian, Greek remains

OPATIJA HOTEL ESPLANADE

Hotel Esplanade

For 10 nights, prices per person

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dep | June 23/30, July 7 | £ 209 |
| | July 14/21/28, Aug 4/11/18 | £ 218 |
| | Aug 25, Sept 1/8/15 | £ 195 |

Single rooms no extra charge

1 min private beach excellent swimming open-air concerts and plays sailing fishing water-skiing walking (seaside walks to north and south, Mount Učka botanical gardens

POREČ HOTEL BELLEVUE

For 14 nights, prices per person

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Dep | June 12/26, July 10 | £ 245 |
| | July 24, Aug 14 | £ 255 |
| | Aug 28, Sept 11/25 | £ 230 |

Single rooms no extra charge

1 min beach swimming boating excursions to Lamole lake and Motovun (old walled town) good souvenir shopping floral gardens

choice of local and international restaurants

Note: All prices include return airfare from London.

1a) Look at the written description of a youth hostel in Workbook Exercise A and use it to write one of your own.

1f) The Taylors are looking at the brochures which Tracy brought from the travel agent's. Look at the brochures (below). If there is anything which you don't understand, ask your friend or your teacher,

"What does (X) stand for?"
or "What does (Y) mean?".

1g) Ask and answer questions about the brochures, like this:

A: How much does it cost for 10 days in Portorož in June?
B: A hundred and sixty-seven pounds per person.

A: Does it cost extra for a single room?
B: Yes, it does: three pounds per night.

A: What can you do in Portorož?
B: You can swim, sail . . .

(Of course, you may think of other questions.)

1h) Imagine that you are writing a hotel brochure. Your organization is offering package holidays in:

i) Budva–Hotel Continental
ii) Piran–Hotel Riba
iii) Korčula–Hotel More

Work in groups. Think of details like
- prices
- what there is in the hotel
- what people can do.

Figure 2.5. Small-group discussion activity. *Note. From Angleški jezik: Učbenik* (pp. 139-140) by R. Knight, T. Kobilica, M. Knight, and E. Kožar, 1982, Maribor: Založba Obzorja. Copyright © 1982 by Založba Obzorja. Reprinted by permission.



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## STUDENT-DIRECTED WHOLE-CLASS ACTIVITY

The use of learners to promote learning in a whole-class setting is widely viewed as an excellent way to inject variety into classroom activity. If used in moderation, peer teaching of this kind provides a change of pace while imposing minimal organizational burdens on the teacher.

An example of this kind of peer-directed learning is provided by Peeny (1981). A copy of a drawing or photo illustrating a dialogue or text that the class has been studying is given to each student in the class. All students, including the one who will act as peer teacher, are assigned to write six questions (and the corresponding answers) on the content of the drawing or photo. In addition, each student writes six false statements about the illustration. All students except the one designated as peer teacher prepare these questions, answers, and false statements as a homework assignment; the peer teacher's work is corrected by the teacher at the beginning of the next class.

The peer teacher then conducts the class for a period of between 15 and 20 minutes. The student reads the false statements he or she has prepared; the rest of the class is responsible for correcting the statements (although students are not allowed to look at their own written work). The peer teacher then poses the questions he or she has prepared and calls on students to answer them.

The main virtue of this activity is in the oral practice it provides. Even students with less oral fluency than their peers can successfully lead the class in this activity, since the key to the activity is not the complexity of the questions the peer teacher asks or of the false statements that the peer teacher presents for correction; rather, it is the relevance of the questions and statements to the illustration (and to the text or dialogue to which the illustration is related). A simple question may be as useful a vehicle for reinforcing new vocabulary as a more complex one.

There are other obvious advantages. The stu-

dent who will serve as the peer teacher is likely to be more conscientious about preparing for the task, and the rest of the class will have the opportunity to see a peer communicate with them successfully (even if within a controlled situation). Whether it is used only once a week (as Feeny recommends) or somewhat more often, the activity can be a very useful step in bolstering students' confidence in using the target language.

Numerous other activities in which one or a few students interact with the rest of the class can be used from the beginning stages of language instruction on up. Among these are the following.

### Games

Many well-known games can be effectively used to reinforce basic elements in the language. "Simon Says" can be used for command forms; "Buzz" can be used for practice in producing numbers (students can be instructed to produce either cardinal or ordinal numbers), as can bingo. "Twenty Questions" gives students the opportunity to produce "yes/no" questions. Lee (1979) offers many other games appropriate for beginning and intermediate language classes, along with useful suggestions for using games in the classroom.

### Role Plays and Interviews

One or a few students can be provided with information that allows them to play a certain role: a reservation agent, a receptionist or telephone operator, a librarian working at the circulation desk, or some other "expert." The rest of the class is given questions that can be answered from the information provided. The class records the information given by the student(s) playing a particular role; afterward, the entire class can check the accuracy with which the information has been given.

Such activities are particularly useful in preparing students to participate in conversation out-

side the classroom. Students should be encouraged to ask for repetition of answers they did not understand the first time, to confirm what they have heard by paraphrasing or repeating the answer, and to inform the student(s) providing information when their answers are not clear.

To illustrate this kind of activity, an airline timetable, a list of fares, and information of procedures and restrictions are given in Figure 2.6. With this information, a student role-playing an airline reservation agent can provide classmates with answers to questions such as the following:

Do you have flights from ___ to ___?
How much is a one-way (round trip) ticket from ___ to ___?
Do you have a flight to ___ that arrives before noon?
Do you have flights to ___ on Saturdays?
Do the flights to ___ make any stops?
What's the latest flight from ___ to ___?
Is there meal service on flights to ___?
What's the cheapest fare for flights to ___?

Many additional role-playing activities can be found in Zelson (1978); some can be quite easily adapted for use in a whole-class setting.

## Additional Ideas

The preceding examples of exercises and activities that stimulate peer involvement represent but a small sample of what can be used in the classroom. Many useful suggestions for student-directed and peer-mediated classroom work are readily available. Teachers who wish to expand their repertoire of such activities might wish to consult Kettering (1975), Dubin and Olshtain (1977), Olsen (1977), Joiner and Westphal (1978), Littlewood (1981), Birckbichler (1982), and Omaggio (1984).

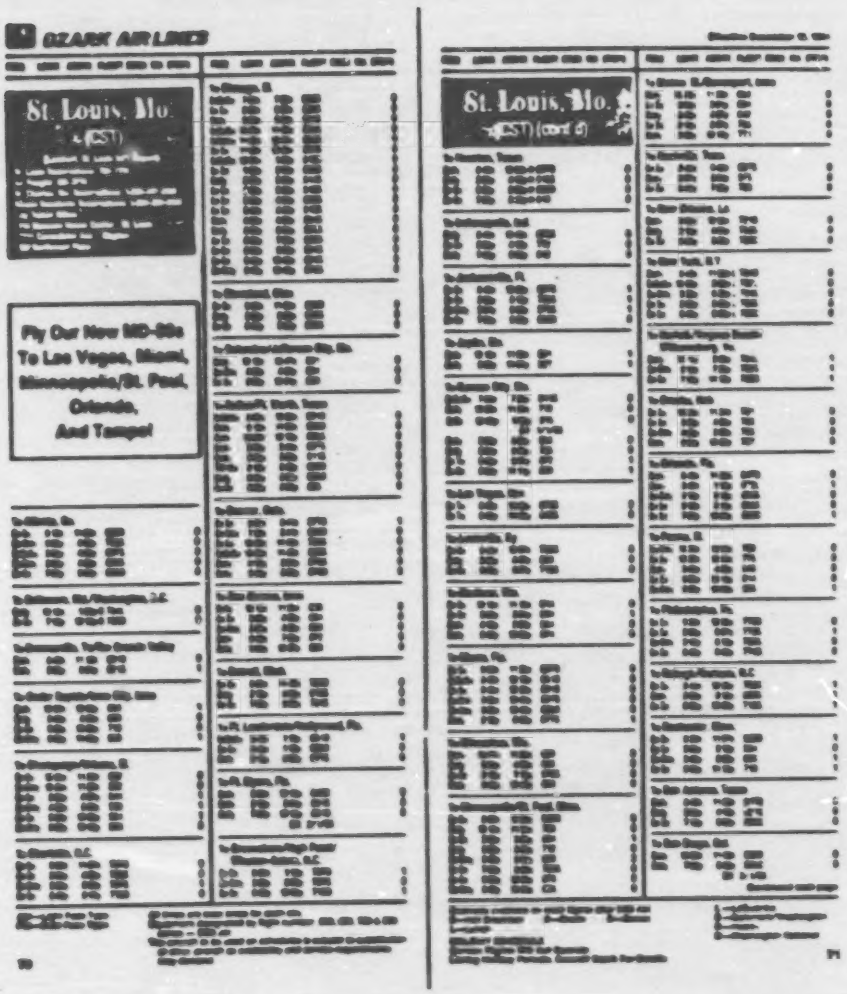


Figure 2.6. Travel information for use in role playing.



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## PEER FEEDBACK PROCEDURES

Part and parcel of many of the activities described so far is the learners' responsibility for providing feedback to each other; that is, to call attention to other students' failure to communicate a meaning successfully or, in the case of precommunicative activities, to signal the presence of an error or to actually provide the correct form. The task of providing feedback, particularly in the case of written homework, is one that in most classrooms is automatically assumed by the teacher (Pack & Dillon, 1980):

> In the traditional classroom situation, the teacher collects homework, checks it and returns it the following day, at best. By then, however, the student is concentrating on something else, so he barely glances at the corrections and he then proceeds to make the same errors on the next similar assignment. A very precious moment has been wasted and, as a result, the student continues to make the same errors and the teacher continues to correct them. (p. 11)

The "precious moment" referred to is the one at which student motivation is highest: the first available opportunity for students to find out what they have done successfully and what they have not done successfully. Peer correction techniques are an efficient way of providing more immediate feedback, which one teacher cannot provide to many students simultaneously. Furthermore, as many advocates of greater peer involvement in the classroom suggest, students can learn a great deal themselves as they provide feedback to their peers.

A number of formats for peer correction are described here; each, of course, has particular advantages and limitations.

## Student-Initiated Correction and Editing

At the beginning of a class, students work in pairs or small groups and compare their homework (this can be done by having individual students exchange papers or through joint discussion). Areas of disagreement are noted, and these are then raised with the teacher. The teacher may circulate among groups or may discuss problem areas with the whole class.

One obvious advantage to this format is that the feedback process is focused on problem areas; areas in which there are no disagreements do not generally lead to profitable discussions. Another advantage of this procedure is that in defending their answers against those of their peers, students are able to reinforce their own understanding (even if this is done in part through discussion in the native language) and can help other students understand the errors they have made. In addition, the procedure can help sharpen proofreading skills and may obviate the need for teachers to correct what are in fact only careless mistakes.

A limitation of the procedure is that students may not know how to approach the task of correcting a written assignment that is so deficient that it cannot be understood. Thus the procedure may be most useful as a means for providing peer feedback for essentially mechanical or quasicommunicative tasks. For written work that is more communicative in nature--that is, that allows students considerable latitude in the choice of forms to express meanings--a selective editing procedure may be useful, whereby students concentrate on correcting one or a few error types (verb tenses, subject/verb agreement, pronoun reference, etc.) (Witbeck, 1976; Pack & Dillon, 1980).

## Teacher-Provided Correction Used by Students

A more guided approach to the editing and correction of student work done both in and out of class is to divide students into small groups. One

student from each group checks his or her work against a teacher-prepared answer key (this can be done before class begins). Each of these students then assumes the role of the teacher in his or her small group.

This procedure was used in the experiment in cooperative learning described by Gunderson and Johnson (1980) (see pp. 54-56), and proved particularly effective for the correction of routine worksheet assignments:

> Several worksheets were assigned with each unit. Each student was responsible for completing every assignment. The first person in each group to complete a sheet had his or her paper corrected by the teacher. He or she was then responsible for checking the papers of the other members of the group. If there were mistakes on the paper of one of the group members, the student indicated them and gave them back to the owner to correct. If the student could not correct the mistakes, the other group members helped. Peer teaching was a constant activity. The corrected worksheet was then turned back to the corrector, or to any other student in the group who had a perfect paper by this time to put an "OK" on it. All worksheets turned in to the teacher for a grade had been checked by group members. (p. 40)

As with student-initiated correction and editing, this approach to peer feedback has obvious advantages: All learners are more immediately involved in their performance; students develop editing skills in connection with their efforts on behalf of their peers; and learning problems are perhaps more clearly highlighted than when the teacher must wade through the entire worksheet or homework assignment of every student in the class. The limitation of the approach is that it is less effective for the correction of more open-ended tasks; that is, assignments for which there may be a

wide range of possible answers or that entail composing skills that even the best students in the class are not capable of monitoring.

## Activity-Based Peer Feedback

For some communicative writing tasks (and indeed for oral production tasks as well), peer feedback can be effectively provided in the form of overt peer response. Examples of the kinds of tasks for which such peer feedback is both feasible and desirable include the following.

*Composing written (or oral) instructions.* One student is shown a model built of Lego pieces (or some other construction set); the student must prepare a set of instructions for other students, who have not seen the model. The success with which the students can use the written or oral instructions provides meaningful feedback on the communicative effectiveness of the instructions. Variations on this activity include directions for following a route on a map and instructions for filling out parts of a form not provided on the form itself.

*Providing information for comprehension.* A student is given information by the teacher to incorporate into a prepared oral presentation or written composition. Some of the information is vital to questions that other students must answer on the basis of the oral or written report. The success with which students can derive the necessary information to answer the questions provides direct and striking evidence to the student of his or her ability to communicate meanings unambiguously; moreover, any problems that arise can become the focus of classroom discussion.

## ONGOING PEER INVOLVEMENT IN THE LANGUAGE CLASSROOM: TWO EXAMPLES

Many of the peer-directed activities described in this chapter can be used on an occasional or frequent basis in the second or foreign language classroom. While some teachers will choose to use such activities simply as a change of pace, others will exploit pair and group work more regularly, as a follow-up to whole-class presentation of new material.

The peer feedback procedures described in the previous section suggest a way in which peer involvement can be built into basic classroom procedures. In the final part of this chapter, two foreign language programs in which peer involvement plays a central role in the overall classroom format are examined.

An experiment in "cooperative learning" in two junior high school beginning French classes is described by Gunderson and Johnson (1980). The program was explicitly designed to discourage individualistic and competitive behavior and to stimulate students' collaboration with their peers. In each of two classes, 30 students--most of them highly motivated--were randomly assigned to groups of five or six students (minor adjustments were made to equalize the number of males and females in each group). Each group remained intact for a full trimester; at the beginning of the next trimester, new groups were formed. Each group was given two types of responsibilities, academic and "housekeeping":

> Academic responsibilities included learning the French assignments and helping the other members of the group complete the assignments successfully. Nearly all learning activities were cooperative ... activities centered around worksheets, studying for tests, group reports, dialogues, pretests, and reviews. (p. 40)

Housekeeping assignments involved taking attendance for members of the group, distributing and collecting assignments, and cleaning up after class. The extent to which responsibility shifted from the teacher to students was especially evident in connection with group-prepared reports. Each group worked on a report during the trimester and was responsible for planning the report, dividing the work up among group members, putting together the contributions of each member of the group, and presenting the report to the entire class.

Some intergroup competition was encouraged to inject variety into classroom activity--involving competitive games such as "Hangman," bingo, and so on--and each student did one creative individual project each trimester. The grading system, however, reflected the emphasis on group cooperation that was central to the whole program:

> Grades were determined 50 percent by the student's individual work and 50 percent by the group's work. When a test was given, for example, all students would take it individually. The scores of the group members were averaged to determine the group grade. The student's actual grade was then the average between his or her individual grade and the group's grade. Besides grades on written work, projects, and tests, students received a weekly grade for not speaking English during a designated period of time during each class. In order to ensure that members of a group helped each other remember to speak only French, the grade for not speaking English was again 50 percent determined by the individual student's behavior and 50 percent by the group's average grade. (p. 41)

During the first three trimesters of the program, observers were struck by the amount of activity and the quality of learning taking place. The students in the program were conscientious in all

phases of small-group work, and this attitude carried over to large-group work. At the end of the third trimester, a questionnaire was administered to the participating students. Among the findings were the following:

- 98 percent of the students indicated that they wished to take a second year of French;
- 82 percent said that they preferred to learn French in the cooperative group format;
- 90 percent felt that they learned by helping others to learn, and 94 percent felt that they had helped classmates in their group;
- only 9 percent of the students felt that they would have learned more by not being a member of a cooperative learning group; and
- 94 percent of the students felt that their teacher, who had played a considerably more indirect role than usual in much of the classroom activity, cared about their academic progress.

The extensive use of peer teaching in a program described by Barnett (1973) grew out of practical necessity. The Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) Spanish program she describes was beset by many of the problems that typically confront foreign language departments: uneven enrollment at different grade levels, an overload of students in one language (in this case, Spanish) over another, large class size at some grade levels, and an influx of both students who had transferred from schools without a foreign language program and pupils who moved from one language program to another within the school.

To many of these problems, peer teaching proved to be a partial solution. In Spanish classes at each of four grade levels (5-8), many classroom activities were conducted in small groups of two to five students (with one or two students in each group serving as peer teachers). For these groups, the peer teachers are those "who are ahead of most

of the class in ability or in work covered or who are simply ahead of their little group in [a] specific learning activity" (p. 635). In grade 5, groups stay together for relatively short periods; at other levels, students may work in the same group occasionally for up to a month.

This small-group format is but one situation in which peer teaching is used. Small groups are also used for the benefit of students who are weaker, not just in one particular learning activity, but as language learners in general. Such students work with peer teachers. These latter are not always the most advanced students; rather, they are students who have themselves had difficulty as language learners and have mastered their problems. Such remedial groups are problem-centered; once a student has learned the skill being taught in one group, he or she goes on to another. The group itself lasts only as long as it takes for every tutee to master the particular learning point for the group.

Other peer-mediated activities include the use of one student to lead the class in games (through which much of the drill work is done), mixed-ability group work in which a faster student leads the group by teaching the rules of a game and then leading the group in playing the game, and dialogue practice in a small-group format.

In addition to stressing the benefits that peer involvement of this kind provides to students, Barnett (1973) underscores the different, and in some ways more demanding, role that the classroom teacher must play. The teacher must circulate among groups to be sure that instruction is being carried out properly. The teacher must also make sure that the students serving as peer teachers are keeping up with their own work. Setting up groups demands a considerable amount of clerical work, and the teacher must meet with peer teachers to decide what activities and techniques will be most effective. In Barnett's view, however, these new demands are more than offset by the gains achieved through peer teaching. The classroom in which peers are involved in each other's learning can:

reach more successfully students of varying abilities and linguistic development levels. Within each class period there are several activities on various levels taking place. It helps ... create a situation in which most students can achieve success. (p. 637)

[CHAPTER 3 CROSS-LEVEL PEER INVOLVEMENT IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING]

The programs discussed in this chapter differ from each other in many ways. Some are small pilot programs; others are established, large-scale programs. In some, peer teaching and tutoring is highly structured, with peer involvement serving to supplement regular classroom instruction; in others, interaction between peers is designed to accomplish goals that are quite different from those of the language classroom. Some of the programs have been designed to achieve a single goal, while others are multipurpose. Together, the programs suggest the variety of purposes for which peer involvement programs in second language learning situations are designed and the variety of program formats that are possible.

## SAME-AGE

### A Single-Purpose Approach

A cross-level peer tutoring program with narrowly focused objectives is described by Anderson and Berger (1975). The program was designed to help fourth-grade, limited-English speakers improve their mastery of basic structural elements of the target language. Evidently, it was a pilot program, since only four pairs of students participated. The tutees were limited-English children enrolled in a regular fourth-grade class in a New York City public school. The tutors were fourth-grade native

speakers of English from an "open" classroom. The tutors and tutees were acquainted with each other through common activities such as music, physical education, and the lunch period. The four tutors had volunteered to participate in the program. Recruitment of volunteers had been directed at the children in the "open" fourth-grade classroom, since it was felt that the learning environment of these children might already have provided them with the self-direction and individual initiative that would be necessary for effective peer tutoring.

The ten lessons that formed the content of the tutoring sessions focused on basic aspects of English syntax: the verbs *to be* and *to have*, singular/plural, *there is* and *there are*, descriptive adjectives, articles, and the use of the auxiliary *do* in negative, interrogative, and emphatic forms. These lessons were prepared before the program began. In addition, an orientation was held for all participants. Both the content of the lessons themselves and the procedures to be followed in the tutoring sessions were explained to the tutors and tutees:

> Two sets of lessons were used, one for the tutor and one for the tutee. The tutor's sheet had the objectives of the lesson listed at the top, followed by a series of exercises to be conducted orally with the tutee. The last part of the sheet had a copy of the independent work the tutees were to do to test comprehension. A "key" was provided for correcting the answers. The tutee's worksheet stated the objectives of the lesson on top and specific instructions to listen to his or her tutor. In addition, each lesson had two phases, an oral and a written. The lesson always began with the oral work and proceeded to the reading exercises. In evaluating the children's work, tutors were advised against marking any answers as "wrong." All responses were marked "Do over," if incorrect. The instructor continually supervised all efforts. (p. 4)

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The results of this small-scale experiment were encouraging in many ways. The tutees enjoyed the close contact with native-speaker peers. Two tutees who did not speak in their regular classroom related well to their peer tutors. The tutors were able to follow the procedures; in addition, they often devised creative techniques to reinforce the material of the lessons. Like other peer involvement programs for elementary students, this program confirmed that specific objectives and procedures, along with close supervision, are especially important for young learners. The planning and supervision involved were amply justified by benefits that might not be possible in large-group instruction.

## A Multipurpose Approach

An example of a larger-scale program in which fluent speakers work with limited or non-English-speaking age-peers is the program administered by the Center for Studies in English as a Second Language at Boulder (Colo.) High School ("Peer Tutoring," 1982). The Center was established in 1979 to provide help to the increasing number of limited-English students in the school district.

Instruction for ESL students in the Boulder Valley School District is provided at Boulder High School. Most of the secondary-level ESL students live in that attendance area; those who do not are bused in. In 1982, the Center staff provided services to around 100 students. The students came from approximately 17 different language backgrounds and were of various nationalities. Their previous educational experience ranged from no schooling at all to a background comparable to that of the native English speakers in the Boulder schools.

The Center initiated a program of volunteer peer tutoring, in which fluent English speakers work with both individual limited-English students and small groups of students. Some of the tutoring is done independently; some is done under the supervision of a classroom teacher. Tutors work with their ESL peers in a number of different ways; some

activities are designed to supplement and reinforce the ESL classes in which nonbeginning tutees are enrolled. A central file of activities is available for tutors to use, with material assigned to two levels, one for beginning students and the other for more advanced students.

In addition to these language activities, tutors work with the ESL students in other areas. They assist tutees in developing effective study skills, and help them with their homework assignments. Tutors are also expected to provide affective support, "to be advocates for the ESL students, to help them with the complexities of the school system and of American society in general" (p. 1). In this way, the program combines language-based activities and the affective support that is necessary to facilitate the adjustment of limited-English students to the school setting and to the community as a whole.

These two programs described were developed to assist second language learners in conventional monolingual school settings. Peer involvement can also be useful in bilingual/bicultural settings to stimulate contact among students with different native languages.

## Bilingual/Bicultural Settings

How can successful learning arrangements in content areas be adapted to the special circumstances of a bilingual/bicultural setting? One example is provided by Brown (1979), who describes a format for a high school science education course in which learners work in small teams and direct their own learning of concepts and techniques.

When first implemented in monolingual settings, Brown found that the team project approach, in which small groups of students interested in the same inquiry worked together, fostered much greater cooperation than the conventional teacher-directed format. In particular, students with special talents--for example, a student with ability in statistics or a new foreign student with firsthand knowledge of

wildlife in another region--were more likely to be able to exploit their special abilities and knowledge, and would be more fully appreciated by peers, in the team approach. A system of team grades on projects and examinations, along with a combination of self-, peer, and teacher evaluation, also contributed to producing a classroom that was less competitive and more productive.

In developing a version of this team system--in which peer teaching occupies a central position--for bilingual/bicultural education, Brown made several assumptions, among which are the following:

- "Language exchange between members of mixed-dominance teams will enhance learning of the 'other' language."

- "Cooperative learning (the mode in many non-Anglo cultures) is encouraged by group grading and comes to be valued."

- "Socialization of members of different cultural groups is facilitated and self-concept is enhanced" as a result of peer teaching and self-directed learning. (p. 234)

To illustrate how the model would work in a bilingual classroom, Brown describes a hypothetical class composed of roughly equal numbers of monolingual English speakers and limited or nonspeakers of English. Students are grouped into teams of two Spanish-dominant (or some other language) and two English-dominant (monolingual) students per lab table. Each team is given a packet "with bilingual instructions for activities which demand relatively little reading but maximize reasoning and manipulation of equipment" (p. 232). The materials themselves use alternate languages in context, so that members of a team alternately must rely on and be relied on by their peers for explanations of parts of the materials.

One advantage to this approach is that all team members are engaged in goal-directed activity in which students must alternately come to understand

the target language in context and be able to communicate meaning to peers who have less proficiency in a language. The peer exchanges in two languages provide valuable support for formal instruction in English and Spanish (or some other language) in the regular language classroom. Another advantage is that this materials- and student-centered approach can be used equally well in classrooms with monolingual or bilingual teachers.

Bilingual materials designed for or adaptable to bilingual science classes were in preparation at the time of Brown's report. One such effort is the Pomona, Calif./South Florida University Project, which translated and adapted an Intermediate Science Curriculum Project for grades 7-9.

Each of the programs described thus far in this chapter use native speakers of a language as a resource for age-peers with limited fluency in the language. This is a basic form of the cross-level, same-age pattern, and it can be effectively used at virtually any level with learners of any age. An example of a similar program at the university level is the Conversation Tutor Program, discussed later (pp. 78-81). In many language-learning situations, however, students must develop fluency in a language that is neither their native language nor the primary language of the larger community in which they live. The target language may be the medium of instruction in the educational system, and it often serves as the language of official and commercial activity. In recent years, a variety of terms have been coined to label what is neither a second language nor a foreign language: for example, "English as an additional language" and "English as an auxiliary language" (Judd, 1981). The important point about such language use situations is that large numbers of people must attempt to develop proficiency in the target language without access to a large, native speaking community. Fluent nonnative speakers of the language are one available resource.

Thus, another basic form of cross-level, same-age peer involvement in language learning is the pairing or grouping of more proficient and less proficient age peers. Differences in educational

background, family circumstances, and other factors account for the different abilities of learners of the same age; in a common setting, these learners can probably all profit from peer-led activities in the target language.

An experimental peer teaching program for entering freshmen at the Vidyodaya campus of the University of Sri Lanka (Brodkey, 1974) illustrates both the possibilities of such a program and the initial obstacles a new program faces. The program had two aims: to develop conversational fluency in English, and to improve students' ability to read freshman-level textbooks in English "with the rapidity and level of comprehension suitable for homework assignments in academic subjects where lectures, discussions, and testing are conducted in Sinhala or Tamil, not English" (p. 163).

Students arrived at the University of Sri Lanka with widely differing English skills. Some (particularly students from urban areas) were highly proficient, while others (generally students from rural areas) had minimal fluency in the language. Although classes are not conducted in English, most of the textbooks used are written in English. Furthermore, fluency in English is both a marker of socioeconomic prestige and a means of advancement.

The majority of entering students lacked fluency in the spoken language and were unable to read at the level at which textbooks are written. English classes were available, but class size (ranging from 25 to 100 students), teaching methods (directed primarily at improving reading comprehension), and a lack of materials did little to improve oral fluency. While progress in reading was achieved, the majority of students did not achieve sufficient ability to read English textbooks.

The program that was developed in response to this situation used small, peer-led discussion groups of about six students each. Students were assigned to groups randomly; each group usually had at least one or two relatively fluent students. Brodkey (1974) describes the way the groups functioned as follows:

> Lecture rooms were rearranged so that students could sit in circles of six and talk to each other. One teacher was assigned to monitor two groups at a time, and as many as six groups and three teachers sometimes operated simultaneously in one room. Teachers were encouraged to present speaking games such as "20 questions," "adding to a story by turn," or simulated conversations such as "planning a trip," or "a job interview." However, teachers were asked to turn all conversation over to group members as rapidly as possible, and to refrain from continually leading and lecturing to the groups. (p. 164)

After a short time, the groups began to function as had been hoped. The fluent students soon began to encourage the less fluent students to participate, and the less fluent students overcame their shyness and made efforts to use what English they knew.

For a number of reasons it was not possible to assess the effectiveness of the peer-led groups in developing oral fluency. The program was started too near the end of the academic year; furthermore, the newly reopened campus was "experiencing unusual administrative problems, irregular attendance, and all the disruptions that accompany the approach of final exams" (p. 165). In addition to these factors, the relatively unstructured format of the conversation groups was a radical departure from the normal practice of teaching according to a predetermined linguistic syllabus. While the students appeared to adjust fairly quickly to this innovation, some of the teachers had reservations. Some teachers had difficulty adjusting to their new role as catalysts and supervisors. Whether such difficulties would have eventually disappeared could not be determined.

The Whisman Language Tutor Program (Mountain View, Calif.) is an excellent illustration of a peer involvement program specifically designed to accommodate the very different but equally important needs of tutors and tutees. The tutors in the program are learning-disabled students, low achievers for whom traditional methods of teaching have been unsuccessful. A typical tutor in the program was described by his third-grade teacher during the previous year as having been disorganized, easily distracted, and unable to begin and complete tasks or to maintain peer relationships. One explicit goal of the program was to provide tutors with the opportunity to experience success and to develop their sense of self-esteem.

The tutees were limited-English students from 19 language backgrounds, including Vietnamese, Cantonese, Burmese, Spanish, and Tagalog. Tutees were paired with tutors primarily on the basis of personality; outgoing tutors are paired with shy tutees, and more withdrawn student tutors are paired with outgoing tutees.

The Whisman program was developed on the principle that both the tutors' activities and the materials used should be structured and tightly controlled. The materials consist of a ten-level set of graded activities written to help the tutees acquire syntactic structures of English through questions and commands. Level One involves single-word commands to which the tutee must respond: *sit*, *run*, *hop*, and so forth. At Level Five, the tutor poses "*or*-choice" questions: *Is the dog in the bag or in the box?* Questions become more complex through Level Ten. At each level, the tutor reads the commands and questions and evaluates each response of the tutee as correct or incorrect.

The tutors are trained by an aide who follows a written training agenda. The 30-minute training sessions familiarize the tutors with the specific procedures to be followed during each 30-minute

tutoring session (these procedures are discussed in Chapter 5 (pp. 109-11).

The program is designed to have tutees perform at a high success rate. If accuracy falls below 90 percent, the aide adjusts the material downward until the 90 percent criterion is attained. Such adjustments are based on the work of the tutor in tabulating the tutee's performance.

In their description of the program, Price and Dequine (1982) report that the teachers of both the learning-disabled tutors and the limited-English tutees have been pleased by the program. Tutors learn organization and attention to task. Working with material that makes reduced demands on their reading abilities, they improve their reading comprehension, sense of syntax, and general verbal ability. The program also provides tutors with an increased sense of self-esteem and self-confidence--a result of having provided help instead of receiving remedial attention. They also derive the satisfaction of a close peer relationship. For the tutees, the program provides language acquisition activities under the close individual supervision of a tutor trained to evaluate the tutee's progress. More important, perhaps, the tutee experiences a successful and close relationship with a native-speaker peer, and this undoubtedly encourages limited-English participants to establish other peer relationships.

An impressive example of a peer involvement program designed to accommodate the needs of junior high school ESL students at different stages in their development is described by Akigbe (1975). During the first stage of the program, the ESL students, whose native languages are Spanish and Korean, are involved in no fewer than three different kinds of peer tutoring. In their ESL classes, the students are paired with each other for some of the drill activities. This experience is supplemented by two other kinds of peer involvement, as follows.

A *content tutor* helps an individual ESL student in course work outside the ESL classroom; that is, in the regular classes of the school program (math,

history, science, etc.). The content tutor reports on the tutoring sessions to the subject teacher in whose class the ESL tutee has experienced difficulty. The subject teacher, in turn, suggests additional tutoring activities to the content tutor; the teacher also informs the tutee's ESL teacher of the tutoring report and subsequent recommendations.

A *peer teacher aide* helps in the ESL classroom by working with small groups of students or individual students according to lesson plans prepared by the ESL teacher. In the ESL classroom, the teacher, peer teacher aides, and two adult aides rotate from one group to another. The peer teacher aides and adult aides are responsible for checking student performance in drill-type activity and for discussing problems at the end of the class period.

Both content tutors and peer teacher aides do a great deal more. According to Akigbe, they also:

> help in making games to go with the specific lessons, conversation tapes, writing rules in [the tutees'] native language for classroom teachers, as well as school contracts in the students' first languages, and correcting papers. They are sometimes sent to other classes to help interpret standards or explain problems to non-English speaking students. Content tutors and peer teacher aides take students to the library and help with library assignments and lead campus tours of small groups of ESL students for orientation lessons. They are also helpful in taking students to the nurse's office and to other stations where an interpreter is needed. (p. 2-3)

Because the tutors do not evaluate the tutees (they neither give grades nor keep records), they are viewed by the tutees as friends with whom they can discuss problems that they would not feel comfortable discussing with a teacher. This sense of trust may be facilitated by the fact that during this initial stage, the peer tutors are either

former ESL students (whose native language is either Spanish or Korean) or students who are Spanish-English or Korean-English bilinguals because of their home environment. In either case, the tutors must be honor roll students with strong personal qualities.

The second phase of the program begins once the ESL tutees have broken the language barrier--once they have become able to function with English in the school setting. At this point, they are assigned a monolingual English tutor, who takes over the responsibilities of the content tutor (adapting these somewhat to the now-different needs of the tutee). Exactly how much progress a tutee must have made in order to be assigned a monolingual peer tutor is not specified in Akigbe's report; clearly, though, the monolingual peer tutor's primary role is that of a "big brother" or "big sister" who provides modeling in the target langauge and in cultural behavior patterns for the ESL tutee. In addition, the tutor should facilitate the development of friendships with other native-speaker age-peers.

All tutors receive training both before they begin tutoring and while they are tutoring. Both content and peer teacher aides are regularly observed by the ESL teacher, who provides constructive criticism. The teacher also makes supplementary material available and shows the tutors how to use audiovisual equipment. For their participation, tutors receive school credit under the heading of "school service."

In Akigbe's view, the greatest strength of this multidimensional peer tutoring program is that it contributes in numerous ways to the adjustment of the non-English-speaking student to the junior high school:

> ESL students no longer have to experience failure in a school with limited bilingual or ESL academic courses. Content teachers have an interpreter/translator service when needed. The overburdened ESL teacher can give individual attention to students by using the tutors for grouping, and can

> motivate his students by the use of games made by the tutors. Misunderstandings can be prevented because students have been informed of school rules which are included in contracts in the student's language. Communication with other departments concerning the progress of ESL students is facilitated by the use of the tutoring report. The bilingual and monolingual content tutors and peer teacher aides are viewed by ESL students as friends who build a bridge for language, culture and knowledge in the junior high setting. (pp. 8-9)

There are several reasons why a tutoring program such as this may not be feasible in many settings. Schools with a more heterolinguistic ESL population may find it impossible to gather a sufficient number of former ESL students and other bilinguals to provide for the needs of learners from a variety of first language backgrounds. The obvious administrative complexity of the program may also overtax an ESL staff with large numbers of students and little release time to coordinate the program. Nonetheless, the idea of providing different kinds of peer involvement at the different stages in ESL students' adjustment is worthy of serious attention.

Most intergrade programs in second language learning have older, fluent speakers of the language teach or tutor younger, less proficient learners. An underexploited variation of the intergrade pattern is to have second language learners use their developing language skills in working with younger learners (either fluent speakers or, like the tutors themselves, second language learners). While the older learners may be less proficient linguistically, they have knowledge and skills that they can successfully impart to younger peers, even with limited fluency in the language.

An activity in which limited-English sixth graders write stories and then dramatize them for younger students (some monolingual English speakers,

some limited-English speakers) is described by Schmelter (1972). Although her report makes it clear that the activity was not part of a regular, systematic program of peer teaching, it could very easily be the basis of a modest program of peer involvement of this type.

As part of their classroom work in reading and writing skills, Schmelter's students wrote and illustrated short stories. Each student presented a summary of the story to the class; the student explained the new words they had used in their stories, and these words were added to the children's vocabulary lists.

The students had already been going into fourth- and fifth-grade classes to present their stories when the activity was expanded to include a first-grade class. A special story based on material first graders could understand was written as a group project, and large pictures were cut out and mounted on poster board to illustrate the story. Four sixth graders with reading deficiencies were chosen first to dramatize the story and then to teach their parts to four first graders. The sixth graders helped their younger peers with pronunciation, expression, and story sequence.

The experiment culminated when the first graders came into the sixth-grade class and dramatized the story for the students who had originally written it. In Schmelter's view, the activity was both enjoyable and productive, as the sixth graders with language difficulties had had an opportunity to discover that they had the ability to create an activity that promoted the younger students' interest and language development.

## INTERSCHOOL

A program developed by Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) and the Transitional Bilingual Program of Massachusetts (Martin & Berka, 1980) provides an example of interinstitutional cooperation

to address the needs of bilingual students, and confirms the value of peer tutoring in a bilingual setting.

Science and engineering students from WPI taught science to children in kindergarten through eighth grade in bilingual classrooms in a number of schools. Among these WPI resource aides were native speakers of Spanish, who could provide science teaching skills that teachers in the bilingual program lacked. In addition, they served as positive role models for limited-English children.

Six WPI students were teamed with five bilingual teachers for an academic year. The aides conducted science classes in English and initiated peer teaching in small groups. The groups consisted of students with varying English language and science skills; peer teaching emphasized basic scientific concepts and the ability to translate these from English to Spanish.

A number of benefits resulted from this cooperative program. The bilingual teachers learned to teach science more effectively through their contact with the WPI students, who were not teachers themselves. The WPI students received valuable experience in communicating their knowledge to nonexperts --the students and the teachers. At the same time, their experience in the bilingual classrooms acquainted them with teaching as a possible career. Extensive contact with fluent, bilingual, college-age students provided the bilingual pupils with positive role models and awakened their interest in science and scientific careers.

## RECIPROCAL

The existence in many settings of two groups of language learners, each learning the native language of the other group, creates a unique opportunity for reciprocal peer teaching. In no other area of education are learners as likely to have complementary

abilities that allow them to assume alternately and purposefully the role of tutor and tutee.

Two examples of reciprocal peer involvement in second language learning are described here. One involved elementary school children learning Spanish and English; the other was designed to enhance the learning of French and English by college-age students in a bilingual college in Canada.

English-Spanish

An experimental program in reciprocal peer tutoring was designed by August (1982). Twenty-six Mexican-American children participated in the program. The children ranged in age from six to ten; all were pupils in a special early childhood education program for kindergarten through fourth grade in a K-8 elementary school in Mountain View, Calif. Of the 729 children enrolled in the school, 118 were classified as limited-English speakers.

The 26 participants in August's program had been assessed (by means of the James Language Dominance Test) to be either limited-English speakers (and fluent Spanish speakers) or fluent English speakers (and limited-Spanish speakers). In the first phase of the program (in fact, the first of two experiments to measure the effect of peer interaction on second language development), 12 limited-English children (LES)--including an equal number of boys and girls--functioned as peer tutors for fluent English-speaking children (FES).

During the time when their language arts class met, the tutors were taught an activity by an instructional aide. Each of the activities was short, and each contained an element of novelty. The activities were drawn from art, cooking, magic, and science. The instructional aide taught the tutors both the English vocabulary and the procedures necessary to teach the activity to an FES peer.

Tutoring sessions took place after lunch time in the language arts center. Each LES tutor was able to select an FES partner (tutee) to work with. Both tutors and tutees had received training before

the beginning of the program, so that all participants knew the rules for the peer tutoring sessions. For example, one rule stated that tutees should allow tutors to communicate by gesture only after the tutors had made several attempts to convey information in English.

Altogether, the first phase of the program consisted of 30 one-hour sessions that took place over a period of several months. Each of the LES tutors participated in peer tutoring in place of their regular language class, in which the Distar Language Program was used.

In the second part of the program, 14 FES children--again, an equal number of boys and girls--were peer tutors for LES pupils. The purpose of peer tutoring in this phase was to determine the effect of peer tutoring on the Spanish development of the FES children, who used the Spanish version of the Distar program in their regular Spanish-language classroom. Again, the nonfluent tutor was to teach an activity in the target language to a fully fluent peer.

As in the first phase of the program, the tutors were taught an activity by an instructional aide, who helped the children with the Spanish vocabulary and procedures necessary to teach the activity to a fluent Spanish-speaking partner. For this part of the experiment, the activities involved art or cooking. The tutors were able to choose a fluent Spanish peer to work with, and again each tutor engaged in 30 one-hour tutoring sessions over a period of several months.

The results of August's study are discussed in the Appendix (see p. 140). Two final points will be made here. First, the peer tutoring program, as designed by August, did not attempt to have pairs of LES and FES students teach each other in English and Spanish, respectively. For reasons of experimental design, restrictions had to be placed on whom the FES (limited-Spanish students) could choose as tutees during the second phase of the program. Clearly, however, the program could be easily modified (and undoubtedly would be modified) to allow for genuine reciprocal peer teaching. For

this reason, it has been discussed as an example of reciprocal peer involvement.

Secondly, the program is based on the concept of having the less fluent partner act as peer teacher or tutor. This is probably less common than the use of a more fluent peer to teach or tutor a less fluent peer, but research in second language acquisition and the results obtained in a number of programs argue strongly for further exploitation of this approach to cross-level peer involvement.

English-French

A peer involvement program, in which learners of both English and French as second languages learned each other's languages, was designed to meet the needs of a large number of students at Glendon College, a bilingual undergraduate university college in Toronto.

In their progress report on the program, Martin, Lewin and Cooke (1978) cite two main problems that the program was designed to address. The first was the relatively large number of ESL learners (more than one-fourth of the total student enrollment of 1,300 were native speakers of French from Quebec) and French as a second language (FSL) learners. In addition, there was relatively little mixing of students from these two groups; as a result, valuable opportunities to practice what had been learned in second language classes were not being exploited.

A program was designed to provide each language learner with an opportunity to meet with speakers of the target language in a situation in which the *target* language would be used. The program also provides each learner with an opportunity to meet with speakers of the target language in a setting in which the learner's *native* language would be used. Thus, each learner would receive the benefits of group activity in the learner's target language and would in turn, as a native speaker, provide the same benefits to other learners.

Twenty-four ESL students and 24 FSL students

were selected to participate in the pilot phase of the program. Each group of students was subdivided into four smaller groups of six students each. As part of the first-year ESL or FSL course, each small ESL group would meet for an hour with a small FSL group to do various activities in English. Each small ESL group also met with *another* small FSL group for an hour a week to do activities in French.

An important feature of the program is the fact that ESL (or FSL) learners do not meet with the same group for one hour in English and one hour in French. Such a situation would be somewhat artificial, particularly when one group is more proficient in the target language than the other. By meeting with different groups, learners become accustomed to whichever language has been designated the code for a given pairing of groups.

It was hoped that the groups would choose, design, and direct their own activities after the first few meetings. It was further hoped that groups would do both typical classroom activities and out-of-class activities. They were encouraged to meet off-campus (e.g., to visit cafés, art galleries, street festivals, etc.); both for these activities and in on-campus meetings, the students' classroom instructors were available to provide help in making arrangements, reserving rooms, and locating and duplicating materials.

The goals of these peer interactions were the same as those of the participants' language classes: to improve oral skills, to give students opportunities to put their developing skills to use in authentic communication activities, and to expose students to another culture; to teach students, by putting them in contact with each other, to "understand, evaluate, criticize, discuss and appreciate another culture" (p. 127). In the classroom, spontaneous and directed conversation, debates, and games were used extensively. In interactions between groups of ESL and FSL students, many of these same activities were used; in addition, students taught minilessons in such different areas as macramé, the language situation in Quebec, backgammon, and macrobiotics.

During the first group meetings, instructors attended but deliberately refrained from directing group activities or repairing conversational breakdowns. For the instructors of these students, as for those in other new programs (for example, in the program at the University of Sri Lanka; see pp. 65-66), this new role can be difficult to adjust to, at least initially. For the participants, too, the group sessions required a period of adjustment. In general, however, native speakers were extremely supportive of their second language peers; they listened carefully to what second language learners were saying, anticipating conversational difficulties and making conversational repairs. Native speakers occasionally made corrections, and second language learners often asked native speakers whether they were using words correctly.

From anecdotal evidence, it appeared that all participants were learning two important lessons from the sessions. They learned that their own language learning problems and frustrations were shared by their peers, and they became more sensitive to the needs of their language peers.

## INFORMAL

Peer involvement programs of this type are probably more common than the number of published reports would indicate. The program described by Akigbe (1975) is an example of an effort to provide for the adjustment of second language learners to a school setting (see pp. 68-71). In this section, a program designed for ESL students at the university level is summarized.

The Conversation Tutor Program (CTP) is a model of how peer tutoring can supplement a university-level intensive English program (Conerly, 1980). English-speaking students and community volunteers work with small groups (three or fewer) of intensive English students at the University of Southern Mississippi. The main goal of the CTP is to meet

the needs of second language students who are being trained in linguistic skills but who lack the opportunity to use these acquired skills in communicative settings. By providing students with a chance to meet native speakers of American English in an informal, nonthreatening situation, the CTP aims to develop learners' confidence in their ability to actually communicate in English, to increase their understanding of U.S. culture and the sociolinguistic rules of American English, and to make them more aware of the role played by nonverbal and paralinguistic signals in communication.

The situation of foreign students at the University of Southern Mississippi is similar to that of students in many other university-level intensive English programs. Even when class size is small, the intensive nature of the program limits students' opportunity to develop real communicative control of the language in the classroom. Outside of class, it is often difficult for foreign students to make contact with native speakers. Thus, despite the fact that students are immersed in the target language environment, they often lack the confidence and the means to improve their oral proficiency in the language through social interaction. Frequently, the result is that foreign students spend time with other foreign students, which contributes further to their sense of isolation from native speakers and engenders resentment and alienation.

The CTP consists of daily one-hour sessions. Participation by intensive English students is voluntary; those who participate continue to take their full load of intensive English classes. Sessions generally last from two to three weeks; some students are encouraged to continue in the CTP for another two- or three-week period.

Tutors are selected on the basis of competitive interviews. CTP tutors are paid from the Intensive English Language Institute budget and through the federally supported Work Study Program at the Hattiesburg campus. A supervisor and coordinator are responsible for selecting and training personnel, assigning students to groups, coordinating

scheduling, and administering financial reporting and evaluation.

Training for the tutors is extensive. In her report on the CTP, Conerly (1980) reviews these training procedures in detail. Training consists of consultations between the coordinator and individual tutors, a video training film and follow-up activity, and a series of group training sessions.

In the consultations with individual tutors, the coordinator familiarizes them with the purposes and procedures of the CTP. The activities on which the sessions are to be based are also discussed.

These activities are of two kinds. In the conversation activity, tutors are given a list of 20 possible conversation topics. Each includes specific suggestions for stimulating discussion. Examples of topics are: holidays, medicine, the role of women, superstition, death, and prejudice. Many of the topics relate directly or indirectly to the experience of living in a university community. Second, in field activities, tutors are encouraged to integrate out-of-class activities with the sessions. Trips to museums, shopping centers, supermarkets, local schools, and sporting events are encouraged in connection with discussions of related topics. On a limited basis, tutors may also have students participate in recreational activities. These field activities count for one-half time; in other words, a two-hour field trip to a museum counts as the equivalent of a one-hour "classroom" conversation session. The actual responsibility for planning each session and developing specific activities, however, is the tutors'.

The second part of the tutors' training is based on the video training film "Peer Tutoring" (Ferris, Krautwast, & Olson, 1978). This training film illustrates basic "dos and don'ts" in peer tutoring. After they view the film, tutors answer a set of self-check questions based on the film. One of the questions asks tutors how they would apply the guidelines presented to their own tutoring situation.

The final phase of tutor training consists of three workshops. These inservice meetings, flexibly

scheduled according to program and personnel needs, allow tutors to discuss any administrative problems that may have arisen, to share their experiences with other tutors, and to plan additional activities such as parties and longer field excursions (which the tutors may choose to do on their own time for the benefit of their students). Each workshop has a central theme, however; these themes are "learning to attend," "barriers to communication," and "nonverbal cues and cross-cultural communication." Each training session is highly structured, with specific goals, materials, and activities (for a fuller description, see pp. 112-13).

Students are grouped according to level of proficiency. Tutors meet with up to three students with different first-language backgrounds and of roughly equal ability in English. In addition, care is taken to prevent a highly verbal student from dominating a session. In such cases, as well as in cases of personality conflicts, students may be moved to different conversational groups. Identification of such problems is the tutor's responsibility; the coordinator, once notified, takes whatever steps are necessary to correct the situation.

The CTP uses three different kinds of evaluation. Students evaluate their tutors; tutors evaluate their students; and the program as a whole is evaluated. Students who miss more than two sessions are dropped from the program; tutors who continually receive poor evaluations from their students are likewise dismissed.

Normally, a tutor meets with two different groups during each two-week period. At the end of two weeks, a tutor is assigned to two new groups of students. Over an eight-week period, then, a tutor may interact with over 20 different students. This, in the opinion of the Intensive English Language Institute staff members, is a cost-effective way of enriching the intensive English experience that students receive in their classes.

[CHAPTER 4 CROSS-LEVEL PEER INVOLVEMENT IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING]

This chapter is organized in a way similar to Chapter 3. Examples of cross-level peer involvement programs developed for foreign language learning situations will be described and compared.

## SAME-AGE

In second language instruction, the use of native-speaker peers as conversational partners for foreign students at the college or university level has great potential. Often, a similar possibility exists in foreign language learning. A program developed at the University of Missouri-Rolla (Giauque, 1975) suggests ways in which foreign students can contribute to first- and second-year language courses and at the same time derive a number of benefits from their involvement with foreign language learners.

Of the 50 Latin American students enrolled at the Rolla campus, three served as "animateurs" for a Spanish class of some 20 American students. One day a week, the class was divided into three groups, each led by an animateur. While their tasks included going over assignments, explaining difficult points, and correcting grammar and pronunciation errors, their main functions were to generate communication in Spanish and to create a Spanish ambiance.

The point of departure for these small-group workshop sessions was the current assignment. The real goal of these sessions was to create a situation in which the students communicate with a native-speaker peer. If the animateur was unable to explain fully any material causing difficulty, the professor, who circulated among the three groups during the first several sessions, could make suggestions.

The small-group work supplemented the four hours of classroom instruction the students received each week. In addition to providing a change from whole-class, teacher-student interaction, the sessions allowed the students to practice items they had been learning in the course. The sessions also provided for the use of the language skills that they had begun to practice in class.

One advantage to having foreign students as tutors is that learners tend to be less inhibited with a speaker whose social position is the same as their own. This difference is partly explained by the greater authenticity of the tutor-tutee relationship in the workshop sessions (Giauque, 1975). In the classroom,

> it is difficult for the American student to use the target language with a teacher who he knows speaks English. The teacher's role, his subconscious tells him, is to teach, not to play at speaking another language. But if another person who is not the teacher, a peer, uses the target language, the American student immediately feels that the situation is authentic and his inhibitions disappear very rapidly. The teacher then becomes a source of help, rather than a source of annoyance. (pp. 131-32)

The foreign student tutors were selected on the basis of intelligence, sensitivity to the problems of learning a foreign language, empathy, imagination, pronunciation, and ability to accommodate their speech to beginning learners. One hour of

academic credit was given to the tutors (up to a maximum of three credit hours) for their participation in the program. In addition to meeting with their groups each week, the tutors were also expected to complete a limited amount of assigned reading and a project in one of several areas related to language instruction and cross-cultural behavior. A pass/fail grade was given by the supervising professor at the end of the academic quarter.

Because of the small scale of the program, the animateurs could work in close consultation with the supervising professor. Formal training was quite limited. The tutors observed at least one workshop session, mainly for the purpose of learning that no special preparation was necessary for them to tutor effectively.

Participation in the tutoring program offered the foreign students more than academic credit. The small-group interaction in Spanish that was so useful for the students in the Spanish class also produced social and psychological benefits for the tutors. American students learned to appreciate the contribution that foreign students can make to a campus, and friendships between tutors and their students often developed. All participants learned a great deal about another culture through direct contact that might otherwise not have occurred.

Whether such peer involvement can be developed in a particular setting depends, of course, on the availability of native speakers of the langauge being studied. Some colleges and universities may not have a sufficient number of native speakers of, say, German who are interested in serving as animateurs. One alternative is to find native speakers of the language in the larger community. Even then it may be difficult to find age-peers for the language learners, and scheduling problems would undoubtedly be more challenging.

English-Speaking Learners of French

A cross-level peer tutoring project (Fitz-Gibbon & Neay, 1982) involving first- and fourth-year students of French in an urban comprehensive school in the Newcastle (England) area suggests means for planning and carrying out a small-scale intergrade program using teachers without extensive inservice training.

Researchers from the School of Education at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne met with the foreign language staff and administrators at a comprehensive school and suggested the possibility of an experimental project in peer tutoring. The project would be designed and run by participating teachers, with the University contribution confined to collecting evaluative data. Two teachers--one teaching first-year students of French and the other a teacher of fourth-year French--agreed to collaborate.

The context in which this project took place can be partially inferred from the results of a questionnaire administered to first- and fourth-year students before the program began. Asked to indicate agreement or disagreement with a number of statements about French language study, both groups of students showed little reluctance in expressing their dislike for the subject. Only one in ten students agreed with the statement, "I enjoy French"; close to 80% agreed with the statements, "French is a waste of time" and "I hate French." Not a single one of the fourth-year students agreed with the statement, "I would like to visit France," and only 3% of each group agreed that "French is a useful subject."

What makes these results even more startling is that the first-year students had not really even begun to study French; their first-year course was a "prelanguage" program that introduces French culture and customs and a limited amount of vocabulary. By contrast, the fourth-year students constituted the relatively small percentage of students who had per-

severed through three years of French already; thus they were not dropouts, but the "survivors," so to speak.

The participating teachers chose the exercises that would be used in tutoring sessions:

> These involved French to English and English to French translation of five vocabulary areas: numbers from one to forty, days of the week, naming colours, telling time and the weather. It was important that these topics represented work which the tutors [who were chosen from among low-achieving fourth-year students] needed to learn or practice and which were suitable for the tutees. (p. 40)

The project consisted of six 70-minute periods over a three-week span. Each 70-minute period was divided as follows: an initial 20-minute period during which tutors prepared with their supervising teacher, a 30-minute tutoring period, and a 20-minute discussion between tutors and their supervising teachers of the problems the tutors had encountered. Half of the tutoring groups met in the classroom of one of the teachers; the other half met in the other supervising teacher's classroom.

The peer groups themselves consisted of one tutor working with two tutees. Pairings were made as follows:

> Tutees were assigned to tutors from rank-ordered lists, so that high-scoring tutors worked with high-scoring tutees. The main concern prompting this method of assignment was the need to avoid having a tutor faced with a tutee who was more able. (p. 41)

Although the supervising teachers were present in the classrooms while the tutoring sessions took place, they did not interfere in the tutoring

sessions; suggestions and corrections were given to tutors only during the follow-up period.

The supervising teachers characterized the tutoring sessions as orderly and purposeful; although different tutors chose different teacher styles--some relaxed and informal, others very businesslike--all the tutors, despite being low-achieving fourth-year students, proved quite capable of conducting the sessions without assistance. The quality of the teaching seemed to vary according to the quality of resource materials available for use by the tutors. Information on the success of the project, as measured by the evaluative data collected, is reported in the Appendix (see pp. 145-46).

## Portuguese-Speaking Learners of English

The Fitz-Gibbon and Reay (1982) intergrade peer tutoring project was designed to stimulate the interest of poorly motivated and low-achieving fourth-year students. The program at the Catholic University of São Paulo (Brazil), which Celani (1979) reports on, was directed primarily at the needs of first-year students taking a degree in English.

The problem was one that most language teachers have to deal with to some degree. The students' initial enthusiasm for acquiring oral skills in English often disappeared very quickly. According to Celani, there were a number of reasons for this widespread decrease in motivation. Foremost, perhaps, was the fact that students had virtually no access to English outside of class. In view of the lack of practice opportunities outside of class, the students' initial expectations may also have been unrealistic; in 1977, more than 86% of the 170 first-year students indicated that they expected, after a single year of instruction, to acquire near-native speaking and listening skills in English. In addition, the curriculum for the first two years of instruction was aimed much more at skill-building--that is, practicing the language for its own sake--than at using the language for communication.

A number of measures were taken to provide for greater use of English in the first-year classes: individualized pacing, small-group work emphasizing role-playing, simulations, and other more "communicative" activities (such as classroom activities based on interviews of the few native speakers of English in the community). What seemed to be most effective, however, was a peer tutoring program in which selected fourth-year students met with groups of about ten first-year students for three or four hours a week.

The fourth-year students (referred to as "monitors"), who had been selected on the basis of their oral proficiency in English, their personalities, and their enthusiasm for language learning and interest in foreign culture, provided extra small-group language practice and helped students with individual learning difficulties. These activities were a useful supplement to what the first-year students received in their regular classes. But the greater benefit of the program was psychological; according to Celani (1979), the monitors were:

> the realisation of an ideal, the ideal near native speakers that most beginners aim at becoming by the end of the course. Thus it has been possible to sustain the initial high motivation, in spite of adverse circumstances, by having monitors close to first-year students, as evidence of what can be achieved in not too long a period of time. The junior students know that only three years earlier their monitors were in a position similar to theirs. (p. 199)

For the monitors themselves, the program apparently provided important benefits. The monitors received no compensation, and the time commitment was substantial--roughly ten hours a week, including preparation, consultation with teachers, and actual contact with the first-year students. Yet competition among fourth-year students to become monitors was keen. Being a monitor carried a great

deal of prestige; in addition, it provided more advanced learners with an opportunity to practice their language skills and use the language in a meaningful way.

English-Speaking Learners of German

Like the tutoring program for Brazilian learners of English, the program developed by Semke (1975) for American learners of German at Westmar (Ia.) College was based on the premise that peer involvement provides benefits to both the more advanced tutors and the less advanced tutees. Unlike the program at the Catholic University of São Paulo, however, the Westmar program was developed as an integral part of both the first- and second-year German courses; it was thus designed to involve *all* students at these levels. The program was to be a part of each first-year student's experience with the language, and all second-year students--not just those who were most proficient in German or most enthusiastic about working with less advanced learners--would act as tutors.

One hour a week of "drill sessions" was added to the four regular class hours at both levels. Based on the schedules of the students in the two classes, five drill session groups were set up. Each small group consisted of between six and ten students, with a minimum of two second-year students and four first-year students in each group. Altogether, the program involved 27 first-year German students and 16 second-year German students.

The tutors themselves were to be in charge of the sessions. Since the tutoring sessions would be directed at the materials the first-year students were working with, some of the first-year course material (the *Guten Tag* film series and textbook) was included in the second-year course. The tutors also took the same weekly tests on *Guten Tag* as the first-year students.

Each week, short discussions were held in the second-year class to determine what would be done in the upcoming drill session. The most frequently

used activities were: conversation practice based on question-answer drills; vocabulary drills; oral reading; review of grammar exercises; and review of the current film. The tutors were not restricted to these activities, however.

Responsibility for making the drill sessions useful was shared by the tutors and tutees. The tutors filled out a form after each session that summarized and evaluated the session. The first-year students also kept a record of their attendance (attendance at the sessions counted toward the final grade in each course).

Student reaction to the program at the end of the first semester was overwhelmingly favorable; all but one of the 27 first-year students wanted the program continued during the following semester. The tutees found the sessions enjoyable and helpful. For the second-year students, the program was also rewarding, and all of the tutors were willing to continue participation in the program during the second semester.

From the teacher's perspective, the fact that the students were using German during most of the hour was an important asset of the program. The more relaxed atmosphere of the small-group format was also considered valuable in allowing the tutees to ask questions and to seek help. The program was seen as instrumental in reducing the attrition rate after the end of the first semester. Twenty of the 27 first-year students continued with the second semester; in the two previous years, only slightly more than half of the first-year students had done so.

## INTERSCHOOL

### French and Spanish

In an interschool tutoring program described by Biehn (1975), students in third- and fourth-level high school French and Spanish classes taught FLES classes to students in grades 4-6. One of the most

noteworthy features of this program was that the tutors participated in preparing teaching units and materials.

The need for the program arose when a new school building was opened in the Geneseo (N.Y.) School District. Half of the K-6 children were moved to the new facility, but no FLES teacher was hired for the new building. Concerned about the possibility that a flourishing FLES program would no longer be available to all elementary students, the foreign language department at the high school received permission to develop a peer teaching program.

The tutors in the program were volunteers who gave up study hall periods or foreign language class periods twice a week in order to participate. The entire third quarter of the school year was spent in planning the program, which did not begin until the fourth quarter. During this time, the tutors were active in developing the course content (Biehn, 1975):

> Each would-be tutor made up a teaching unit on an assigned topic (colors, animals, classroom objects, etc.). They suggested vocabulary and indicated teaching methods. They made visuals such as flashcards and charts that could be used. They especially tried to think of games that could be played and described these games in the unit. Then all of the units were placed in a central file accessible to all the tutors. The plan was to cover as many of the units as possible, but there was no pressure to finish them all. There was no strict order as to which unit had to follow which. The tutors chose the units they planned to teach each week according to the capabilities of their group and according to their own personal preference. (pp. 929-30)

As part of their initial training, several of the tutors participated in simulated teaching situations with seventh-grade students. Videotapes were made of these sessions; the tapes were then viewed and discussed by all the tutors. Tutors were instructed to emphasize the spoken language, although attention to writing was not excluded. They were also instructed to report any disciplinary problems to the elementary teachers immediately.

Participation in the FLES program was voluntary. The elementary school teachers sent out a mailing that explained the program to parents. After parents had indicated whether their child would participate and which language the child would study, the elementary teachers placed the children into compatible learning groups of three to five students. Each tutor met with one of these groups twice a week for a half-hour each time. Because of the "open school" nature of the elementary classroom building, finding a comfortable place to meet informally presented no difficulty.

While they were teaching, the tutors recorded their teaching experience in journals. They kept track of their own performance and of the progress of their students (although the FLES students received no grades).

Altogether, more than 20 peer teachers and close to 100 FLES students participated in the pilot phase of the program. The students' progress exceeded expectations, and the number of students who dropped out was very small. On the whole, the tutors found that their experience in the program, which offered them the opportunity to use what they had learned in their own language learning efforts, was highly rewarding.

The use of language students as peer teachers in a situation in which conventional teacher-directed instruction is not possible may be one of the most productive applications of peer involvement in foreign language learning. As school systems come under increasing pressure to reduce budgets, many so-called "luxuries"--prominent among these, FLES and other language programs for elementary school children--are dropped; in other cases, such

programs are not established because of the staffing costs involved.

French, Spanish, and German

An even larger-scale interschool peer teaching program was begun in 1975 in the Memphis (Tenn.) City School System. By the 1977-78 school year, 80 second-year high school students of French, Spanish, and German were providing peer instruction to approximately 1,500 elementary students in ten different elementary schools.

The High School Languages Tutoring Program (Williford, 1979) was developed after other alternatives proved unfeasible. Funds to provide trained personnel to offer foreign language instruction at the elementary level were not available, and attempts to have local colleges and universities set up a course to train elementary teachers were unsuccessful. The High School Languages Tutoring Program offered academic credit to second-year high school students for teaching elementary students twice a week for 45 minutes. Scheduling was made possible by the fact that the high school day ended an hour earlier than the elementary school day, so that instruction could be offered to the elementary students at the end of their school day. The program was based on wide support and coordination among the foreign language consultant for the Memphis City School System, high school teachers, and principals at participating elementary schools.

Lessons and materials were selected and prepared by the teachers and the foreign language consultant, who also acted as liaison between the elementary schools and the high schools. High school foreign language teachers assisted in the planning and preparation work of tutors on the three days of the week when the tutors were not teaching. The role of the elementary teachers was to sit in on classes and maintain discipline. Tutor performance, including ability, attitude, cooperation, and personality, was evaluated by all participating teachers.

The lessons given to the elementary students focused on topics usually covered in FLES programs: greetings, names, colors, numbers, parts of the body, articles of clothing, foods, and commands. In activities such as games, songs, skits, and role playing, the elementary students received an initial exposure to the spoken language.

The success of the program is reflected in the reports of both the elementary school principals, who stated that the program was an important factor in retaining some students in the public schools, and high school teachers, who claimed that many students were enrolling in the second-year language courses because of their interest in participating in the tutorial program.

## RECIPROCAL

The concept of reciprocal peer involvement in foreign language learning is well-illustrated by a program developed at the University of York (England) Language Teaching Centre (Dalwood, 1977). The concept is to:

> pair off an equal number of native speakers of two target languages who act turn and turn about as teacher-informant and learner, within a carefully planned timetable which also allows for group discussions held one day in one language, one day in the other. The language-of-the-day principle extends in fact to all social intercourse and all work, except for daily target language sessions. (p. 73)

Based on successful implementation of such a program for English teachers of Spanish and Spanish teachers of English, the Centre initiated a summer program for sixth-form students of French and French peers learning English.

The program was designed for groups of well-motivated students, with the total number of participants no fewer than 12 and no more than 32. The program lasts from two to three weeks, during which time the French students come to York and stay at the homes of the English participants or with other families as paying guests.[1]

The key activity in the program is work in pairs. Each pair consists of an English student and a French student, who alternate as teacher and tutee. The pair meets for 75 minutes in the morning and works with a reading text, exercises, and discussion questions selected and prepared by the staff. The role of the peer teacher is to explain difficulties and in general to help the tutee work through the various tasks presented. In the afternoon, pairs come together in small groups (the maximum is four pairs, or eight students, per group) and work further with a member of the staff on the text and accompanying worksheet, again using the language of the day.

Other components of the program include small-group work in aural comprehension and oral expression, pronunciation practice, daily plenary sessions in the language of the day, and evening and weekend activities and excursions. The staff consists of four adult tutors (one of whom serves as the program director). All staff members are effectively bilingual, although two are native speakers of English and two are native speakers of French.

Crucial to the success of the program is the method by which participants are paired. One procedure considered for adoption at the time of Dalwood's report is a system in which each English-speaking participant can choose his or her French-speaking partner on English language days; French

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[1] While it might be argued that the group visiting the host community is, during the duration of its stay, engaged in a *second* language learning experience, the stay is generally so short that the basic relationship of the target language community to the learners remains essentially the same.

participants can choose their English partners on French language days. Pairing is thus flexible and student-determined.

Reciprocal programs such as this obviously require much more long-range planning than most other peer involvement programs. The cost of the program for participants coming to the host community is considerable, and the administrative work involved in setting up the program, preparing materials, finding suitable staff, and arranging for accommodations requires a long-term commitment. Hosting a reciprocal program is an alternative to taking a group of language learners on a study-abroad program, but in no way is it less demanding of the organizer's time and energy. It should thus be best viewed as a very special--and less widely applicable--pattern of peer involvement in foreign language learning.

[CHAPTER 5
SETTING UP A PEER INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM]

In this chapter, general guidelines for setting up a cross-level peer involvement program in language learning are given. The focus of the chapter is on the various decision-making areas that need to be considered in planning, operating, and evaluating a peer teaching or tutoring project.

Because peer involvement programs can vary so greatly in size and scope, the initial stages of program development may need to be more formal in some settings than in others. Even in small-scale projects, however, participating teachers and administrators would be well-advised to give the same care to planning as must necessarily take place in larger programs. Small-scale projects can often be expanded to include more students and to encompass more goals; thus, careful initial planning can make the transition to a larger program much easier.

## DESIGNING THE PROGRAM

Often, the general shape of a program--the students whom it will serve, the goals toward which it will be directed, and other factors--will be dictated by an already-existing need or problem. In such cases, as well as in situations in which peer involvement is viewed as a desirable program component, planning begins with a precise assessment of needs, goals, and resources.

## Needs and Goals

In the best of circumstances, periodic curriculum evaluation will already have suggested in what ways learners' needs are not being met and what educational outcomes are not being produced. Attrition rates in foreign language courses, poor performance on end-of-term tests, and widespread poor attitudes toward foreign language study are observable symptoms of a need to reassess an existing foreign language program. Sometimes, however, unanticipated problems arise. In second language learning situations, a large influx of limited-English speakers to a school system can take place without advance warning. Nevertheless, the difficulty limited-English speakers (or learners of any other second language) may have in coping with the mainstream program and in fitting into the social structure of the school--even when transitional ESL classes are provided--can be anticipated.

The first step in designing a peer involvement program as a partial solution to problems such as these is to determine as precisely as possible the nature of the problem and, if possible, to break the problem down into its component parts. Part of this process is determining whether the problem is a general one or one that affects certain students, or groups of students, more than others. Questions such as the following are useful to ask at this planning stage:

- Is there a link between academic success of limited-English students in our school and their social integration in the school?

- At what point in a foreign language program is the attrition rate the highest?

- Are there specific skills that our second or foreign language students fail to learn in the normal language classes?

- Are there particular attitudes or intergroup tensions that cooperative contact among students might counteract?

From the answers to these initial questions often comes a clearer statement of needs and goals. Along with this first task, it is important to make an initial assessment of the resources available in setting up a peer involvement program.

## Resources

In the initial planning and design stage, attention must be given to available resources. Preliminary consideration of each of the following questions may be helpful in determining what is and is not feasible:

What kind of *administrative support* is available? What role might the principal(s) or headmaster(s) in the school(s) involved be willing to play in promoting a peer involvement program? Is there an ESL or foreign language coordinator available to provide overall coordination?

How many members of the *teaching staff* might be interested in participating in the training and supervision process? In what way can these additional responsibilities be most fairly added to their workload?

What kind of *clerical assistance* is available? If none, on whom will this responsibility fall, or how can it be distributed?

How many potential *tutors* are there in the school building (or in the school system)? What possibilities exist for enlisting the participation of potential tutors?

What *facilities* are available for use by the program? Will there be rooms available for tutoring to take place? Is there secure but accessible space

for storage of a central file of teaching/tutoring materials? Will there be appropriate meeting space available for such activities as tutor training, tutee orientation, and consultations between tutors and supervising teachers?

Are *funds* available to cover costs of materials or materials preparation? What funds exist to cover mailing and publicity costs (for example, when mailings will be sent to parents or to the community at large)?

Again, in many situations--particularly when the program is conceived as a small-scale pilot project involving a single teacher or two cooperating teachers--many of these questions are less immediately relevant than in planning for a larger program. The best guiding principle for initial program design is to think initially in terms of a modest initial program without ignoring altogether the possibility that the program will be expanded.

The initial planning stage may help program designers rule out certain possibilities and focus their attention more clearly on others. From the planning stage should emerge a preliminary plan for allocating responsibility in a number of areas and for coordinating each person's participation. The plan should take each of the following areas into consideration:

- selection of participants;
- recruitment of tutors and program publicity;
- pairing and grouping procedures;
- scheduling;
- preservice training of tutors;
- orientation of tutees;
- supervision and inservice consultation with tutors;

- record-keeping, including evaluation of tutors, tutees, and the program;
- progress reports to classroom teachers, school administration, and parents; and
- materials acquisition, preparation, and filing.

## SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

Program needs and goals determine to a large extent which students are selected to participate in a peer involvement program. Two basic options exist. In some cases, a program is *all-inclusive:* All students in one or more classes participate. Many programs are based on the premise that peer involvement provides benefits for all participants; participation, as an integral part of the overall course, is mandatory. Examples of all-inclusive programs include the Westmar College program (see pp. 90-91) and the experimental program at the University of Sri Lanka (see pp. 65-66).

More commonly, peer involvement programs are *selective:* A limited number of students tutor another group (or class). New programs often begin on this basis, with the aim of becoming all-inclusive at a later time. In selective peer involvement programs, the basis of selection of tutors and tutees can vary greatly. In same-level programs, one obvious approach is to have high-achieving (more proficient) learners tutor low-achieving (less proficient) learners. In cross-level programs, tutors are often selected according to several criteria, including intelligence, fluency, personality, and enthusiasm. Sometimes, however, a cross-level program is specifically designed to address the needs of the tutors as well as those of the tutees. In such cases, the tutors themselves may be low achievers or other individuals for whom peer involvement might be highly reinforcing (for example,

the Whisman Language Tutor Program, described on pp. 67-68).

In selective programs, selection of tutees is generally the responsibility of the teacher(s), in some cases with the assistance of guidance personnel, the language teaching supervisor, or other administrative staff. However, in some cases--many peer-taught FLES programs fall into this category--parents' preferences determine which students will receive peer instruction.

Selection of tutors is sometimes a delicate matter. While it may be more efficient for tutors to be hand-picked, so to speak, it is probably wiser to inform *all* potential tutors of the aims of a peer involvement program and the criteria that will be used in selecting tutors. Many students who might be overlooked may in fact be quite interested in serving as a peer teacher or tutor, and these students may in fact have certain characteristics (such as enthusiasm and other personal qualities) that will enable them to work very effectively with less proficient peers.

A peer involvement program based on volunteering will need criteria for selecting tutors. Following is a list of the main factors that the various peer programs described in this volume have used:

- academic achievement (high or low, depending on program goals);
- proficiency in the target language;
- knowledge of the native language of second language learners;
- sensitivity to language learners and other cultures;
- personality (empathy, enthusiasm, imagination, etc.); and
- work habits and attitude (cooperation, ability to deal with criticism, etc.)

## RECRUITMENT OF TUTORS AND PROGRAM PUBLICITY

In some settings, the problem is not so much one of choosing from among a large group of volunteers as it is finding an adequate number of suitable tutors. When tutors must be recruited, thought must be given to incentives that might make peer teaching or tutoring attractive to potential participants. Recruitment involves two activities: identifying potentially effective tutors and publicizing the program and its benefits for tutors. An example of how potential tutors can be identified is given by Akigbe (1975). In the program she developed for ESL students at the junior high school level (see pp. 68-71), all of the following methods were used to recruit bilingual and monolingual peer tutors:

- observations kept on the progress of former ESL students;
- honor roll and cumulative records;
- counselor recommendations;
- teacher recommendations (especially from department chairpeople);
- recommendations of former tutors;
- discussion and recruitment from regular English classes by ESL coordinator (or from foreign language classes by foreign language coordinator);
- notices in the daily student bulletin; and
- support of English teachers through informative discussion of the importance and advantages of being bilingual.

In many programs based on voluntary participation, the intangible benefits of the program are often viewed by tutors as sufficient reward for their efforts. In other cases, additional incentives are offered. These are generally of three kinds.

## Compensation

At the college or university level, it is sometimes possible to link a peer involvement project with a work study program, so that tutors are actually paid for their services. This puts participation in a peer involvement program into the same category as tutoring work at remedial learning skills centers such as exist in most colleges and universities in the United States. The Conversation Tutor Program at the University of Southern Mississippi (see pp. 78-81) is an example of a program that offers compensation.

## Academic Credit

Many secondary and postsecondary schools have arrangements to award academic credit for certain kinds of work experiences. Two programs described earlier in this volume--one at the junior high level (see pp. 68-71) and one at the senior high school level (see pp. 94-95)--offer this incentive for participation.

## Performance Awards

Neither compensation nor academic credit may be appropriate in many peer involvement situations. There are other ways to recognize conscientious and effective participation in a peer involvement program that both provide peer tutors with a sense of achievement and enhance the prestige of the program itself within the school. Certificates of participation, official letters of commendation,

announcements at school meetings and award assemblies, and other forms of publicity give tutors public recognition of the efforts they make on behalf of their fellow students. In the Whisman Language Tutor Program (described on pp. 67-68), iron-on transfers of the program logo are awarded after a period of successful tutoring; these, along with certificates of accomplishment awarded at the end of the year, provide tangible evidence of the contribution that tutors make to their peers and to the school as a whole.

## PAIRING AND GROUPING

The way in which tutors and tutees are matched is another area in which decisions are shaped in large part by program goals and by the number of participants involved. For example, in foreign language programs in which low-achieving tutors are paired or grouped with younger, less advanced tutees, care must be taken to ensure that no tutees are placed with a tutor less advanced than the tutees themselves. The experimental program described by Fitz-Gibbon and Reay (1982; see pp. 86-88) placed peer tutors and tutees in rank-ordered lists based on pretest scores and grouped the students on the basis of these rankings. In cross-level programs in which the tutors are all considerably more advanced than the tutees, matching of this kind is less crucial.

In some cases, the number of tutees will be much greater than the number of tutors. Grouping in such programs tends to aim at creating small groups of tutees of mixed ability, so that slower learners will have both more advanced learners at their own level as well as their peer teachers or tutors to provide motivation and direction.

Another general practice in cross-level programs is to restrict dyads to same-sex pairings, although there is little empirical evidence to support the claim that same-sex pairings facilitate

learning (Feldman, Devin-Sheehan, & Allen, 1976). Often, it is not even possible to follow conventional practice, as the group of tutors may be predominantly male or female.

Two other possibilities for pairing and grouping are student-determined pairings--an example of this is described in the reciprocal program at the University of York (see pp. 95-97)--and rotating pairings and groupings, in which tutors work with different individuals or small groups for short periods of time. This latter possibility should be viewed with caution, however, since it may prevent tutees from establishing durable affective bonds with a tutor and thus undermine an important goal of a peer involvement program.

## SCHEDULING

Scheduling problems will undoubtedly figure heavily in preliminary discussions of a peer involvement program. If planning takes place far enough in advance, two or more participating teachers may be able to arrange for their classes to be scheduled during the same time slot so that all participating students in an intergrade cross-level program will be free at the same time. With such an arrangement, pairs or small groups of students can meet in one or more of the classrooms.

Sometimes, peer tutoring will have to take place outside of normally scheduled classes, during study hall periods, recesses, or other free time. Here, the participation of school administrators can be invaluable; administrative personnel are in a much better position than regular classroom teachers to anticipate such scheduling needs and to devise solutions. Peer tutoring and teaching sessions held outside of class time are of course easier to arrange at the university level; even here, however, responsibility for securing adequate meeting rooms should generally be taken by supervising teachers or administrative personnel.

As for the ideal length of sessions, the tendency is for peer teaching or tutoring involving elementary school students to last no more than 30 minutes. Sessions involving older learners should range between 30 and 75 minutes, with the most appropriate period to be determined by the level of proficiency of the participants and the nature of the activities done in the sessions.

In determining both the length of individual sessions and the number of sessions per week, program designers should keep in mind that peer teachers and tutors will need roughly twice as much time for preparation, record-keeping, and consultation with supervising teachers (or the program coordinator) as the actual amount of time spent in peer teaching or tutoring sessions themselves. In the actual scheduling of meeting times, it may be wise to schedule, whenever possible, a block of time during which preparation, peer teaching or tutoring sessions, and follow-up consultation or record-keeping can take place consecutively.

## PRESERVICE TRAINING OF TUTORS

An indispensable step in developing a sound peer involvement program is training participants. While in some programs a part of the preservice training is offered to all participants--tutors and tutees alike--usually tutors receive separate orientation before a program begins. Often, some activities are first presented in preservice training and carried over into workshops, meetings, and other inservice activities.

In small programs, preservice training may be relatively informal; in larger ones, the training program often involves considerable advance planning and coordination. The major goals of preservice training, along with some procedures and activities for achieving them, are described in the following pages. Different programs, of course, will choose to emphasize different goals.

## Familiarizing Tutors with the Purpose of the Program

All participants must understand the purpose of a peer involvement program: who will be tutored, why they will be tutored, and with what longer-range goals. An explicit statement of program goals is often made when tutors are being recruited. Even in programs in which participation is mandatory, a clear statement of purposes and goals lays the foundation for the entire operation of the program.

## Outlining Expectations and Responsibilities of Tutors

Tutors must know as clearly as possible what will be expected of them. Understanding their responsibilities helps tutors make most efficient use of time and avoids confusion. In the Whisman Language Tutor Program (see pp. 67-68), a training agenda details the procedures that tutors must follow during the 30-minute period they spend with their tutees as follows:

1. Signing in and out of the tutor room

2. Preparing and cleaning up materials and work station

3. Escorting students to and from class

4. Reading commands and questions

5. Recording responses on the Scoring Sheet--a slash for a correct answer and a 0 for an incorrect response

6. Reinforcing responses with the word "Good"

7. Modeling incorrect responses correctly and then repeating the stimulus, allowing the tutee to respond

8. totaling the responses and graphing the results of the session's work. (Price & Dequine, 1982, p. 367)

In different programs, the tutoring, record-keeping, consulting and evaluation responsibilities of tutors will be explained differently, depending on the age of the tutors and the degree to which tutoring sessions are structured. Tutors who are to receive academic credit or other compensation for their participation also should be told the basis on which such credit or compensation is offered. Tutors also need to know what to do in case they cannot be present at a tutoring session or in the event that their tutee(s) cannot attend.

In an ongoing peer involvement program, an activity that can help familiarize tutors with the procedures they will follow is to have prospective tutors observe the performance of students who are currently tutoring. Learning by direct observation is often much more effective than simply reading or hearing an explanation of tutor responsibilities.

### Outlining Responsibilities of Other Participants

An explanation of the responsibilities of other participants should accompany the outline of tutor responsibilities. Again, depending on the size of the program, training in this area will need to be either relatively informal or very carefully structured. In all cases, however, tutors need to know what kind of problems they should attempt to resolve themselves and whom they should report other difficulties to. Depending on the program, the responsibilities of tutees, teachers, administrators, and the tutoring coordinator may all be explained.

### Providing Tutors with the Opportunity to Meet Each Other

An important function of preservice training is

to enable tutors to establish bonds with each other and to develop a "team spirit." This is important even in programs in which most or all of the tutors already know each other or are in fact classmates. Particularly in programs in which tutors themselves will be responsible for developing materials and activities that will be used by other tutors, this aspect of the training program is essential. Tutors can be an important source of moral support for each other and can provide suggestions and ideas for more effective tutoring. These outcomes are only possible, however, when tutors have had the opportunity to develop a spirit of cooperation.

### Sensitizing Tutors to the "Helping Process"

Willingness and eagerness to work with other learners does not necessarily mean that tutors will know how to do so effectively. In many peer involvement programs, preservice training of tutors includes activities that make tutors aware of the ways in which they communicate. This becomes even more urgent when tutors work with individuals from a different language and cultural background. Particularly in programs in which native speakers with little second or foreign language learning experience or with little previous contact with individuals from different cultures will be tutors, these activities can alert tutors to potential difficulties and can prevent serious cross-cultural misunderstanding.

Examples of such activities are those used in the Conversation Tutor Program at the University of Southern Mississippi (described on pp. 78-81); three workshops (in this case conducted on an inservice basis) were given to tutors, each session stressing a different aspect of the tutoring process.

The first of these, based on techniques developed by Cope and Acton (1978), is entitled "Learning to Attend"; its goals are:

> to provide the tutor with skills to become a more attentive person; to show the tutor how this attentiveness will help him become a better facilitator of communication; to learn how to use the skills which maximize communication by the foreign student and to minimize the verbalization of the tutor. (Conerly, 1980, p. 67)

The second workshop is entitled "Barriers to Communication"; the main activity is a problem-solving task adapted from a lesson in the U.S. Army race relations training program (U.S. Army, 1974). Because the two participants in this exercise are led to believe that they have the same information (when in fact they do not), the exercise can make tutors more sympathetic to the frustrations that language learners experience when their best attempts at communication break down. Thus, the goal of this workshop is similar to that of an activity widely used in teacher training: teaching microlessons in an "exotic" language to remind teachers of the frustrations involved when confronted by an unfamiliar language.

The third workshop, "Nonverbal Language Cues and Cross-Cultural Communication," involves a number of activities designed to make tutors more conscious of their own nonverbal behavior and to alert tutors to the importance of nonverbal behavior in daily interaction. The hope is that tutors will both recognize cross-cultural differences in this area and seek to help tutees become more aware of the rules of nonverbal behavior in their new language community.

Even when such extensive activities are not feasible, some useful basic guidelines can be offered to tutors. Almost always, some mention is made of the importance of positive feedback. Tutors are trained to correct mistakes without discouraging their tutees. Usually, the importance of not patronizing learners also receives emphasis, as well as the importance of establishing an informal atmosphere in which learners feel comfortable.

Providing Tutors with Specific Guidelines

In most cases, particular characteristics of tutees are known in advance, and training can focus on specific techniques and procedures that will make tutors work more effectively. Sometimes, tutors sit in on the second or foreign language classes in which their tutees are enrolled. This part of an overall orientation can be very helpful in demonstrating the abilities and characteristics of the students the tutors will work with. Especially in programs in which tutoring is intended to supplement the course activities (and in which tutors will be working in close consultation with the classroom teacher), tutors need to be as familiar as possible with what their tutees are doing in class and the ways in which tutees respond to different classroom events.

In other cases, specific suggestions can be given for working with learners from a particular cultural background. A good example of such guidelines can be found in the tutors' handbook ("Peer Tutoring ...," 1982) prepared by the Center for Studies in English as a Second Language at Boulder (Colo.) High School. Among the "guidelines for successful tutoring" are the following:

- To a Southeast Asian, the idea of "losing face" often is unbearable. You may easily hurt the feelings of a student if you are not careful. Praise success and try to avoid failures.

- Speak distinctly and ask occasional discreet questions to determine whether previous conversation has been understood. Many Southeast Asian and Latin American youngsters are reluctant to admit that they don't understand something.

- Many ethnic groups feel that it is not polite for young people to look at authority figures. Don't expect students to "look you in the eye" when they speak to you.

• In many cultures it is considered very rude to touch another person on the shoulders or the head. Show pleasure with a smile or word of praise rather than with a pat on the back. (pp. 6-7)

### Giving Tutors a Chance to Practice-Teach or Tutor

The value of providing tutors with the opportunity to practice-teach or tutor is obvious. Both for the tutors themselves and for supervisory personnel, it is a way to ensure that the procedures have been understood. For tutors, it is a way to overcome apprehensions about tutoring and to bolster confidence in their ability to be effective with the learners with whom they will be working.

Often, it is impractical to have tutors practice-teach with the learners they will actually be working with (or with learners of a similar age or level of proficiency). For this reason, microteaching and role-playing, in which tutors alternately play the roles of tutor and tutee with each other, are widely used whenever some practice tutoring is viewed as necessary. Constructive criticism by both teachers and fellow tutors can make prospective tutors more aware of their performance.

However extensive or limited preservice training of tutors is, it is probably most effective when done over two or more training sessions. A reasonable interval between sessions allows prospective peer teachers and tutors to think about what has been presented to them and allows them time to evaluate their commitment to the program. Two hours of training spread over three sessions is in general more likely to be effective than a single two-hour session.

## ORIENTATION OF TUTEES

Before the beginning of a peer involvement

program, tutees also should be made aware of the purpose of the program and the reasons for which they have been asked to participate. This is particularly important in selective programs: that is, when only some learners in a class will receive peer tutoring. It is also important for tutees to be made aware of their responsibilities in the program; in many programs, tutees are expected to keep records of their attendance and to complete evaluation forms on a periodic basis. Tutees must also know what procedures have been established to resolve problems. In many situations, this orientation can be efficiently handled at an initial meeting for both tutors and tutees.

While most of the orientation of tutees is routine, there are situations in which this step takes on special importance. The concept of peer teaching and tutoring within the formal school setting is unfamiliar to second language learners from many cultures, and unless adequate measures are taken to explain the program to tutees, the value of the program may be seriously jeopardized.

A dramatic illustration of this liability is given by Grant (1977), who reported on a very unsuccessful attempt to introduce peer teaching in American Samoa. Resistance to the notion of peer teaching stemmed from two sources. First, there were "ego conflicts" between tutors and learners based on the participants' social background and sex. Males did not like to be taught by females, and students from families with high social status resented being taught by more proficient students from families with lower social status. In addition, there was a widespread reluctance among students to view peers as capable of providing anything of value; only the attention of the instructor was deemed worthy of respect.[1]

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[1] This same problem--the reluctance of students to accept a peer teacher as a teacher--was one of several factors affecting the effort to institute peer teaching as an important instructional compo-

This initial and often deep-seated resistance to the very concept of peer involvement is by no means unique to American Samoa. In different degrees, it exists in many communities as a by-product of the traditional authority conferred on adults in general and teachers in particular. Especially for second language learners newly arrived in a community, special efforts may have to be made to enlist their cooperation as tutees in a peer involvement program.

## ORIENTATION OF TEACHERS

When peer teaching and tutoring is being instituted on a program-wide basis, orientation and training of teachers can be as crucial to the success of peer teaching and tutoring as anything that may be done to prepare the students themselves. The basic premise of peer involvement--that much of what is ordinarily done under the direction of a teacher can be done equally well, and in some cases more effectively, by students themselves--is difficult for many teachers to adjust to initially. In many educational systems, teachers may be resentful of any innovation that, as they perceive it, forces them to relinquish control of the classroom or to acknowledge that students can learn from other students. Unless an effort is made to enlist the cooperation of teachers, the value of a peer involvement program will be seriously undermined. Negative attitudes on the part of teachers will be perceived by students who may in turn be unwilling

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nent in the Samoan Demonstration Project (Douthit & Lung, 1974), an adult education program designed to provide disadvantaged adult Samoan immigrants to Hawaii with the means to compete for vocational and apprenticeship programs.

to commit themselves wholeheartedly to working with and for their peers.

Two additional difficulties must be anticipated by program designers and coordinators. The first is that even teachers who may be positively disposed to the notion of greater peer involvement may find it difficult to adopt the roles of facilitator, counselor, and resource person, which they must play in supervising peer-mediated classroom work and out-of-class peer tutoring. In addition, teachers may feel overburdened by any clerical responsibilities they may be expected to assume on behalf of a cross-level peer tutoring program.

## SUPERVISION AND INSERVICE TRAINING OF TUTORS

Regardless of how thoroughly tutors have been prepared for their responsibilities before a program begins, periodic consultation between tutors and supervising teachers is an important element in maintaining the quality of a tutoring program. A procedure that allows for consultation between individual tutors and a supervisor and for occasional meetings of groups of tutors and their supervisor can serve three important functions. The first is providing tutors with the opportunity to discuss problems they may be experiencing with their tutee(s). Even in the best of circumstances, occasional problems with individual tutees will arise, and reports of problems by tutors will often need to be discussed with the supervisor. In many cases, regular meetings between tutors and the teacher(s) of the tutees may be necessary in order to plan activities for subsequent tutoring sessions. The supervisor may occasionally need to consult with an individual tutor about tutee dissatisfaction.

Second, occasional meetings between tutors and their supervisors (or with the teachers of the tutees) can be used to provide encouragement and general suggestions. In small-scale programs, these meetings can be quite informal and can take place

between the supervisor or teacher and an individual tutor. What is most important is that tutors receive periodic support; to train tutors and then to leave them on their own is not in the best interests of either the tutors themselves or the program. By contrast, favorable reports by teachers on the progress of their students can sustain tutor morale and help maintain their interest in their work.

Third, meetings involving groups of tutors with the supervisor and/or teachers can be useful in a number of ways that, as much as anything else, maintain and increase the overall quality of the program. Tutors can share successful activities and techniques with each other; difficulties can be discussed. In the latter case, one tutor may be able to suggest a solution to another, but even when this does not happen, the realization that all tutors are encountering both success and difficulty can help each tutor put his or her own performance in a proper perspective. Periodic group meetings can also be used to continue activities that were first presented in the preservice training or to introduce new activities as the need arises. Finally, it may be useful to provide tutors with a block of time during which they can work as a group to plan activities for tutoring sessions such as communication exercises, games, and so forth.

It is always difficult to schedule meeting time, particularly for group meetings. While program supervisors must also be careful not to make excessive demands on tutors' time, they must recognize that stimulating interaction among tutors and providing for consultation between tutors and their supervisors can be instrumental in maintaining tutor enthusiasm, teacher support, and program quality.

## MATERIALS

The materials and activities used in a cross-level peer tutoring program will of course vary

according to the age, proficiency level, program goals, and target language of the participants. While it is not possible to argue the merits of materials independently of the program in which they are to be used, it may nonetheless be useful to categorize the materials as follows.

### Classroom Text Materials

In some programs, students will teach or tutor other students using the same materials as the tutees use in their language classroom. Tutoring sessions review and reinforce material already covered in class.

### Supplementary Material

Exercises and activities that are based directly on classroom work and that provide tutees with additional opportunity to learn what has been covered in class are often used in peer tutoring. Frequently, teachers have students do only some of a number of exercises in the text on a particular teaching point; those that are not done in class, either for lack of time or when it is felt that most students have learned the point being taught, can be used in peer tutoring sessions, especially with students who need additional practice in order to keep up with faster students.

### Expansion and Independent Materials and Activities

Materials and activities in this category would include communication games and tasks, self-contained teaching units, and realia that take students beyond the material actually covered in class or that demand of learners that they use what they have learned in new ways.

In deciding to base peer teaching or tutoring sessions on one or another kind of material, program

coordinators and teachers must also decide how to provide tutors with access to materials; in the case of the latter two categories, decisions about developing appropriate materials may also come into play:

- In the case of classroom text materials, tutors must have ready access to the materials. The easiest solution would be to have enough copies of the text so that each tutor could have a personal copy for as long as he or she is tutoring. Where this is not possible, at least some copies of the text should be made available for tutors to consult in planning tutoring sessions (even when the content of the tutoring session will be determined by the teacher).

- For supplementary and expansion materials, teachers should seek alternatives to taking sole responsibility for providing such materials. One approach is for two or more participating teachers to pool their resources. Students themselves can in many cases share responsibility for designing and creating materials: supplementary drills, games, realia, and so on.

In the interschool peer-teaching program described by Biehn (see pp. 91-94), tutors spent the academic quarter preceding the beginning of the program designing teaching units. These were then placed in a central file accessible to all tutors. Tutors can also be encouraged to write up any activity or exercise they have designed during their tutoring experience to add to the file. In addition, tutors can be assigned the task of going through one or more sources of activities for pair and small-group work and to bring particularly attractive ideas to the attention of the entire staff (examples of sources are given in Chapter 2).

## EVALUATION

Systematic evaluation of a cross-level peer tutoring program by tutors and tutees alike is important for a number of reasons. First, reports on student progress may be used by teachers to determine the content of subsequent tutoring sessions as well as to gauge the benefits the program is providing. Reports by tutors and tutees can also provide the kind of information that administrators, parents, and advisors expect about a new program. For the program coordinator, reports from participants are an essential source of information about what is working and what needs to be changed.

In large peer-teaching and -tutoring programs, tutors and tutees regularly complete progress report forms, questionnaires, or journals in which they evaluate their own progress and the performance of their peer partners. Even in small programs, the use of short progress report forms is recommended as a supplement to informal consultation between tutors and their supervisors or between tutees and their classroom teacher. Many students feel more comfortable expressing their feelings on a written form, as long as the form is not too long or tedious. In addition, the use of written evaluations makes progress reporting easier to conduct on a regular basis and simplifies the record-keeping process.

Reports by tutors should include information about the performance of the tutee(s) and the benefits of the program for the tutors themselves. Tutees should also be asked to evaluate both their tutors' performance and their own progress. In this way, a fuller picture of the value of the program in the eyes of the participants can be obtained, and the functioning of individual pairings or groupings can be better understood.

Progress reports or questionnaires to be completed by tutors can address some or all of the following questions:

- Do the tutees arrive on time and attend sessions regularly?

- Do the tutees appear to be interested in the sessions? Are they cooperative? Do they participate actively?

- Have the tutees been making progress? Can the tasks and activities be completed as planned?

- What deficiencies have been most detrimental to the tutoring sessions? In what areas do tutees appear to need additional help?

- How do tutors rate their own performance? What do they perceive as their greatest strengths and weaknesses? Are there any aspects of their participation with which they do not feel comfortable?

- Do tutees appear to enjoy the sessions? Do the tutors themselves enjoy the sessions?

In a similar manner, tutee reports can deal with several different questions:

- Do the tutors create a comfortable learning environment for students?

- Are tutors adequately prepared for each session? Are the sessions well-planned? Are the tutors effective in helping students understand what they are to do and in providing appropriate assistance?

- Do the tutors seem interested in the progress of their students? What are their strengths and weaknesses?

- Do the tutees feel that they are making progress? What do they feel would help enhance the value of the tutoring sessions?

- Do tutees enjoy the sessions? Do they feel that peer tutoring is an effective format for language learning?

Which of these areas are addressed, and how they are phrased, will of course vary from program to program. Tutor reports completed after each session will tend to focus more on the actual content of the sessions (and thus provide more of a log of activities and material covered); reports completed biweekly or monthly will tend to be more broadly evaluative in nature. The wording of the questions on an evaluation form must of course be carefully geared to the age and ability level of the participants; in general, however, evaluation forms should allow for comments, in addition to any "limited-option" items (*yes/no*, multiple choice, or scales) that may appear on the forms.

Three sample progress report/evaluation forms are provided in Figures 5.1-3. Forms such as these, adapted to the needs of a program and used on a regular basis, can provide valuable information about the strengths and weaknesses of the program itself, as well as the performance of program participants.

## A PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

In developing a cross-level peer involvement program, a checklist of tasks to be completed can be useful. The sample checklist in Figure 5.4 can be used as presented, or it can be modified to suit the needs of any particular school setting. In either case, the tasks need not be done in the order listed, and program designers should feel free to combine two or more tasks wherever appropriate.

Tutor: _____ Session Date: _____

Number of students attending: _____

Summary of activities:* _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

| Evaluation of session | Unsatisfactory | | | | Satisfactory |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Student interest | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Cooperation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Student performance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Tutor's self-evaluation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Overall usefulness of tutoring session | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Comments: _____

_____

*If tutors have been given a lesson plan to follow, they may need only to note deviations or omissions from the planned activities.

Figure 5.1. Session report (submitted by tutor to classroom teacher).

CONVERSATIONAL GROUP EVALUATION FORM
(Prepare at end of ten hours)

Student's Name:_____ Section: _____

Tutor: _____

Evaluation:

3 = "good"
2 = "fair"
1 = "poor"

| | |
|---|---|
| Cooperation and consideration for tutor and group | ( ) |
| Interest in activity and conversation | ( ) |
| Attended sessions regularly | ( ) |
| Effort to speak | ( ) |
| Progress in speaking | ( ) |

Comments on student if desired:

_____

_____

_____

Figure 5.2. Tutor report form.

*Note.* Taken from Conerly (1980, p. 126). The Conversation Tutor Program in which this form is used is described on pp. 78-81.

_____
(Student's name)

_____
Date(s) of session(s)

Please answer the questions below.

1. Did you enjoy your tutoring session(s)? YES SOMETIMES NO

2. Was your tutor prepared and organized? YES SOMETIMES NO

3. Do you feel that you have learned from your session(s)? YES SOMETIMES NO

4. Does your tutor help you feel comfortable about the tutoring sessions? YES SOMETIMES NO

5. Were the activities enjoyable? YES SOMETIMES NO

What did you like best about the session(s)?

_____

_____

What did you like least about the session(s)?

_____

_____

Are you satisfied with your own performance in the sessions? YES NO

Figure 5.3. Questionnaire for students.

*Note.* Based on Koskinen and Wilson (1982, p. 95).

| Task | Completed[a] |
|---|---|
| Select a coordinator (or establish a coordinating system) | |
| Identify needs and resources | |
| Establish initial program goals | |
| Enlist support of teacher, administrators, parents, advisors | |
| Recruit tutors: | |
| Develop a recruitment strategy (including publicity and compensation to be offered) | |
| Establish selection procedures | |
| Determine initial program design: | |
| Content of tutoring sessions (including materials required) | |
| Length of tutoring sessions | |
| Scheduling of sessions | |
| Pairing or grouping procedures | |
| Teacher involvement | |
| Tutor, tutee, and teacher responsibilities | |
| Administrative procedures (including record-keeping, consultation with tutors, and progress reporting) | |
| Provide for acquisition, development, and storage of materials | |
| Preservice training of tutors | |
| Orientation of tutees | |
| Orientation of participating teachers | |
| Inservice training of tutors | |
| Program evaluation | |

[a] A check or "X" can be used to indicate that a task has been completed; an "N.A." can be used for tasks that are not applicable to a particular program.

Figure 5.4. A planning checklist for program development.

*Note.* This is an adapted version of a "Checklist for Administrators" in Koskinen and Wilson (1982, p. 104).

[SUMMARY: THE BENEFITS OF PEER INVOLVEMENT]

In many ways, greater involvement of peers in each other's learning can provide a rich and productive supplement to the second or foreign language classroom experience. Peer involvement casts learners and their teachers into new roles--roles that may lead to a number of pedagogical and other benefits. At the same time, peer teaching and tutoring can enrich the total educational and social environment in which learners find themselves.

In this section, the pedagogical, social, and affective benefits of peer involvement are summarized. First, however, it cannot be overemphasized that *peer involvement is not a panacea*. All too often, an educational practice that solves some problems is promoted as a solution to all problems. This is as true of peer teaching and tutoring as it is of any other educational practice. Not all benefits will result from every experiment in peer teaching and tutoring. Sometimes--especially when a peer involvement program is poorly conceived or inadequately administered--precisely the opposite of what is hoped for may result. In many ways, however, peer involvement can do much to enrich learners' experience of the conventional classroom.

## PEDAGOGICAL BENEFITS OF PEER INVOLVEMENT

### Increased Individualization

Peer tutoring allows for differential pacing. Students who master material more slowly can receive

additional exposure to material through individual or small-group work with a tutor. The remedial benefits of peer involvement have been widely observed; a consistent finding of research on peer tutoring is that tutees often acquire skills that they could not or would not acquire in the conventional classroom setting (Sarbin, 1976).

### Intensified Drill Practice

When peer involvement is used primarily to reinforce language classroom drills, students obtain, in purely arithmetic terms, considerably more practice opportunities than are available in the classroom itself. All students potentially benefit from increased practice in skill-getting activities. Those students who find the large-group, public, and sometimes competitive nature of the classroom intimidating are likely to find peer tutoring especially helpful.

### Increased Communication Opportunities

Peer involvement can be especially helpful in developing learners' ability to "use" the target language. The structure of the conventional classroom, as well as the authoritative role that most teachers play in classroom activity, makes attempts at "real" communication in the language classroom somewhat inauthentic. The more intimate nature of small-group or one-to-one peer tutoring, the more equal role relationship that exists between age-peers, and the focus of peer tutoring on the needs of the individual learner or small group all produce an environment conducive to communicative activity. An environment that stimulates and encourages language acquisition is fostered by peer tutoring, which is "interactive, responsive, dependent on supportive, encouraging human beings who believe the function of a message is far more important than the form in which it is sent" (Urzua, 1980, p. 43).

## SOCIO-AFFECTIVE BENEFITS OF PEER INVOLVEMENT

### Increased Motivation

Research on peer interaction (e.g., Beach, 1974; Littlejohn, 1982) argues for the value of peer involvement in increasing motivation. Proficient peers are excellent target-language role models for learners. When a beginning foreign language learner interacts with a more proficient learner, the beginner comes into closer contact with someone who has undergone frustrations similar to those the beginner may be experiencing. The more proficient learner provides vivid evidence that the learner's goals are attainable, and the result is often increased motivation to persevere. In some cases, the result of a peer tutoring program has been a reduction in course attrition.

Even when it is used only on an occasional in-class basis, peer tutoring techniques can inject variety into classroom activity and relieve the boredom and monotony of teacher-centered instruction (Statman, 1980), and thus maintain a higher level of student motivation.

### Strengthened Cross-Cultural Understanding

One of the greatest potential benefits of peer involvement programs in which native speakers and language learners interact is the greater respect and tolerance that each group develops toward the other. Peer involvement programs can be a valuable means for fostering meaningful contact between groups and are often the basis of important social contact and friendships.

In addition to helping establish social bonds between native speakers and learners, peer involvement can reduce tensions that already exist and promote an institution-wide spirit of cooperation. When students are involved in the progress of others, a cooperative, rather than a competitive, atmosphere is produced. This advantage can have

ramifications far beyond any single classroom, as Elliott (1973) points out:

> Perhaps the most compelling reason for the use of students as tutors is to change the social-psychological climate of the school from individual competitiveness to concern for each other. The basis of this concern must be the individual's ability to be aware of another person's feelings and the meaning of what he says and does. There must be recognition that each person has a place, that his ideas are valued and his feelings relevant. (p. 538)

## Strengthened Self-Concept and Sense of Self-Direction

One of the most acclaimed benefits of peer involvement is its effect on both tutees' and tutors' self-concept and self-direction. For tutees, systematic interaction with peers can do much to counteract the dependence on a teacher that traditional instructor-centered classrooms tend to breed. Tutees benefit from the experience of communicating (or at least working toward communication) with a peer model specifically concerned with their progress in the target language. The activities on which many peer involvement programs are based allow learners greater opportunity to discover how they themselves learn best and how they can use the skills they have already acquired. Finally, peer involvement programs tend to cause learners to measure their progress against their own expectations and goals, rather than against the performance of an entire group of learners.

An equally important benefit of peer involvement is the effect produced on the tutor. Quite simply, one learns a great deal in helping another to learn. In a review of research on cross-age tutoring, Sarbin (1976) reports that, in many cases, tutors' academic performance improved as much as, or more than, that of tutees. It is easy to understand

this phenomenon. One need only remember how often teachers say with complete seriousness that they learned more from teaching a course than their students could ever have learned, no matter how well the course had been taught. Like any other kind of teaching, peer teaching and tutoring require much more thoughtful attention to the subject matter than is often required of students in a large, teacher-centered classroom. Furthermore, responsibility for the learning of another student can provide a focus for a tutor's own learning efforts:

> In many cases, the specific needs of the tutee can help direct the learning efforts of the tutor, since in the process of helping he gains immediate access to the tutee's needs and his ability and resources to meet them. The realization that another student is depending on him for assistance and, indeed, sometimes for survival in the course gives him the stimulus he needs to redirect his own learning efforts. (Heard, 1972, p. 318)

Reduced Inhibition

A widely observed benefit of peer involvement is its particular value for students who are uncomfortable in the large-group, "public" classroom. Learners who are inhibited by the dominating figure of the teacher or by the presence of a large number of classmates often open up in the more intimate, nurturing atmosphere of small-group or one-to-one peer interaction. When a learner interacts with a native-speaker peer, peer tutoring can be an "ice-breaker" for establishing acquaintanceships with other native speakers of the language.

It was stated at the beginning of this volume that peer involvement in language learning is an idea whose time has come. This view is supported by research, and it is justified even more by the number of successful attempts to make language learners more responsible for each other's progress than can

be the case in the conventional teacher-centered classroom. In an era when the language-teaching profession is more conscious than ever of the need to consider alternatives to the traditional classroom, peer involvement may be a cornerstone of a new teacher-learner relationship and the basis for more effective and meaningful second and foreign language learning.

[APPENDIX: A SUMMARY OF RESEARCH ON PEER INVOLVEMENT IN LANGUAGE LEARNING]

This section summarizes the findings of several studies that have investigated the effects of peer involvement in language learning under controlled conditions. That is, each study involved systematic observation of the peer tutoring process, systematic measurement of outcomes, or both. This review is in no way meant to be comprehensive; even the small number of studies reviewed here, however, reflect a variety of research approaches to the problem of assessing the effects of peer involvement.

Two notes of caution should be introduced. First, as is inevitable in summaries such as this, many of the details of the individual studies have been omitted. Readers can obtain a much clearer understanding of the rationale of the studies and the procedures used by consulting the studies themselves. Second, the findings of the studies offer only initial answers to the questions they pose. Individually and collectively, these studies represent a first step toward a more precise understanding of the effects of peer involvement in second and foreign language learning.

An early attempt to study the effects of peer tutoring in language learning was Langr's (1973) study of beginning-level college Spanish students. One of three existing sections of the beginning Spanish course at the University of Minnesota-Duluth was designated as the experimental group; the other two sections became the control group. The treatment consisted of help that the researcher provided to the experimental group in organizing and scheduling out-of-class peer-tutoring sessions. These

sessions were entirely voluntary; they were supplements to classroom contact time (which was uniform for all three sections, each of which was taught by the same three teachers on a rotating basis) and in no way figured into the grading system of the course. Except for periodic encouragement that the "experimental" group received to maintain these peer tutoring relationships, the treatment extended no further; neither the content nor the procedures of the tutoring sessions were controlled.

Langr's study provides some evidence for the value of peer involvement. Subjects in the experimental section spent a mean of 10.09 hours in peer interaction during the academic quarter during which the experiment was conducted. By contrast, students in the control group spent an average of only 2.44 hours in student-initiated out-of-classroom peer work. Only on the oral production achievement posttest did the experimental students perform significantly better ($p = .05$) than the control group; however, on ten of the 11 criterion measures--composite score of five progress tests given during the course of the quarter, scores on each of five posttreatment achievement tests, and gain scores, pretest to posttest, on each of the five achievement tests--the mean of the experimental group was higher than that of the control group.

The studies under review here present mixed, though not necessarily conflicting, evidence on the affective and attitudinal effects of peer tutoring. Langr's experimental section engaged in purely voluntary and student-developed peer tutoring for four times as many hours as the control sections, which received no encouragement to organize peer tutoring. This difference suggests that the experimental students must have perceived some benefit to such sessions and experienced some enjoyment from them. The results of a student opinion measure given after the experiment suggest, however, that their interest may have been largely instrumental; the attitude of the experimental students toward Spanish and the course they were taking was no more positive than that of the control students.

A very different approach to the study of the effects of peer involvement from that used by Langr can be seen in Stryker's (1975) study of patterns of use of French and English in verbal peer interactions at the Washington International School. Stryker's research on peer interactions was part of a three-level investigation of the sociolinguistic environment of the school, which was founded in 1966 to provide bilingual education for children in the international community of Washington, D.C., as well as for local families. At the macrosociolinguistic level, the focus was on the principles of the school regarding language use, its academic structures and organization. At the "midsociolinguistic" level, the researcher investigated the linguistic expectations, curricula, and schedules of a single second-to-third-grade classroom in the school. Dyadic peer interactions involving five limited-English students were the basis of the third level of analysis, the microsociolinguistic level.

Whereas Langr's research was product-oriented --focusing on the results of peer interaction-- Stryker's study is process-centered; through both participant and nonparticipant observation, Stryker sought to determine the nature of the larger environment in which peer pairs interacted and the characteristics and evolution of the peer interactions themselves. Stryker hypothesized that in this bilingual school environment, limited-English students would speak the language used by their role-reciprocals, subject to (a) the linguistic expectations in the situation, (b) the dominant language of their peer group, and (c) their competence in the language.

The general principle on which the Washington International School was based was complete two-way bilingualism. This was the expectation for all students, and it was reflected in the use of the two languages (French and English or Spanish and English) on alternate days. At the macro level, one can think of the school as constituting an experimental treatment, at least metaphorically, by contrast with the status of French (or Spanish) in the conventional whole-school context. At the midsocio-

linguistic level (the single classroom observed), however, there were already signs of a conflict; while English and French were to be used exclusively on alternate days, English--the dominant language of the majority of the students--"intruded" on peer interactions in the classroom on days when French was to be used exclusively, although the reverse--the use of French in peer interactions in the classroom on days when English was to be used--did not occur.

This tendency for English to be used in peer interactions was even more pronounced in out-of-class interactions. Regardless of the child's language background, once the child knew both English and French, he or she would use English everywhere except in the French classroom, when required to speak French by the teacher. Furthermore, outside of the French classroom, French was used between peers only in dyads isolated from the group and when both speakers had a French background or one was new to English; however, even in such French-speaking dyads, the bilingual speaker would begin, after a few months, to use English in reply to the newcomer's French.

Johnson (1980) studied the effects on second language acquisition of peer tutoring in a seven-week bilingual summer program at Stanford University's experimental school. Her subjects were 16 limited-English-speaking (LES) Mexican-American children and 16 fluent English-speaking (FES) children. The children ranged from five to nine years of age. A matched-pairs experimental design was used; the LES children were matched on a composite score of English language proficiency and initial amount of interaction with FES children. One child in each limited-English pair was then randomly assigned to the treatment group; the other was assigned to the control group. The FES children were matched on age and sex and were then randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group.

The experimental treatment involved a total of 14 one-hour peer tutoring sessions in which an LES child was paired with an FES child. The purpose of

the tutoring was to provide social contact between children of the two ethnolinguistic groups and to provide the LES children with successful experiences communicating in English. Children in the control group did the same activities as those in the peer tutoring sessions, but they were done in large-group, teacher-directed, one-hour sessions. Teachers in this summer program alternated weekly between the treatment and control groups; in this way, their potential effect on the performance of either group was controlled.

Two hypotheses were investigated. The first was the expectation that LES children would, as a result of their peer tutoring experience, interact verbally with FES children more than the LES children who had participated in the large-group, teacher-directed sessions. It was also predicted that there would be a positive correlation between frequency of verbal interaction with FES children and gains in English language proficiency by LES children.

Following the treatment period, Johnson observed her subjects from both the experimental and control groups during periods when the subjects were free to interact with children of their choice in the language of their choice. A special observational instrument--the Language Use and Interaction System (LUIS)--was used to record the setting in which the interaction took place, characteristics of the addressee, the language used, and the specific nature of utterances. Each subject was observed individually for 20 to 40 minutes a week.

Analysis of the data from these observations showed that the LES children who had participated in peer tutoring sessions interacted in English with FES children to a greater degree than the LES children in the control group.

The subjects in Johnson's study were pre- and posttested on three measures of English language proficiency: the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, the Language Assessment Scales, and the Child-Child Communication Test. Only on the first of these did the experimental group--the children who had engaged

in peer tutoring--significantly outperform the control group.

August's (1982) investigation of reciprocal peer teaching, described on pp. 74-76, was designed in such a way as to permit examination of the effect of peer interaction on the acquisition of both English and Spanish. The experimental treatment consisted of 30 one-hour peer tutoring sessions. The control group in each part of the experiment consisted of a group of children who were receiving conventional second language instruction (the Distar Language Program).

The main issues the study addressed were, first, the effect of peer tutoring on the amount of interaction between children acquiring a second language and fluent peer speakers of the language and, second, the relationship between amount of interaction with native-speaker peers and second language acquisition.

August measured the frequency and proportion of the target language used by the limited-English and limited-Spanish subjects in two settings--in free play and in a structured situation (the latter consisting of a block-building task in which one experimental or control subject--either a limited-English or a limited-Spanish child--two fluent English-speaking children, and two bilingual children participated). It was found that in the structured setting the limited-English children who had received the experimental treatment (30 one-hour peer tutoring sessions in which the less proficient child has served as a tutor) interacted with fluent English speakers to a greater extent than children from the control group. By contrast, the peer tutoring sessions failed to increase the amount of Spanish that the limited-Spanish subjects used with their peers.

The Johnson (1980) and August (1982) findings are based on observations following or concurrent with an experimental treatment; they are thus of a somewhat different nature from the Stryker (1977) data. In Stryker's study, the preference for English as the language of dyadic peer interaction appears to stem from the fact that English was the

dominant language of a majority of children in the classroom that the researcher observed. The relationship between individual peer interactions and the larger sociolinguistic context may help to explain the findings of Johnson and August--in particular, the results of the August (1982) study, in which peer tutoring affected the amount of interaction in English between limited-English children and fluent English-speaking children but not the amount of interaction between limited-Spanish children and fluent Spanish-speaking children. It may well be that the effectiveness of peer tutoring in promoting greater use of the target language depends on the language use patterns in the larger sociolinguistic context. In other words, peer tutoring may be more productive in some situations than in others.

This is the conclusion of Chesterfield, Chesterfield, Hayes-Latimer, and Chavez (1983), who studied the interactional patterns of 11 Spanish-speaking preschool children enrolled in two different bilingual programs. In one program, classrooms had a majority of Spanish-speaking children; in the other, there was a majority of English-speaking children in the classrooms. As a result of their observation of these 11 subjects over the course of one year, the researchers reached the following conclusion:

> Once limited English speakers achieve a minimal level of competence ... the linguistic composition of the class should be taken into consideration in determining the most effective means of facilitating these children's acquisition of English. In classrooms where English speaking children predominate, interactions with these children were found to be a factor in the acquisition of English by limited speakers of that language. Hence, teachers in such classrooms might promote peer interaction by structuring some learning activities as cooperative tasks to be worked on by small linguistically heterogeneous groups of children ... where a balance of limited

> English-speaking children and English-speaking children exists, children of different language proficiencies might be paired to work on individual tasks. In classrooms made up largely of limited-English speakers, on the other hand, the children's second language development might be best facilitated through learning activities that emphasize adult-child interactions. (p. 417)

Sapiens (1982) studied the cognitive and affective effects of peer tutoring involving both fluent bilingual and English monolingual Chicano tutors. The tutors were all high-achieving tenth graders; the tutees were partial bilingual Chicano tenth graders who had been classified (according to CAT grade-equivalent scores) as low achievers. Language proficiency for tutors and tutees was determined by scores on the BOLT-Spanish and BOLT-English. In all, 20 same-sex pairs participated in the study.

The peer tutoring consisted of three 15-minute lessons on latitude and longitude. An adaptation of the Bellack, Kliebard, Hyman, and Smith (1966) system for analyzing verbal interaction was used to code the function and content of verbal interactions in the sessions (which had been audiotaped and transcribed). Criterion-referenced tests were given to assess the effectiveness of peer tutoring sessions. The goal of the study was to determine which peer tutoring relationships were most closely linked to learning effectiveness and what characteristics of the tutoring sessions themselves might be related to the success of the sessions.

This study is noteworthy also for making peer pairing a central issue. In other studies, subjects are often matched on certain variables, with the effect of precluding certain comparisons: for example, between same-sex and different-sex peer pairings. At any rate, sample sizes are in general too small to permit a valid comparison of the effects of different pairings.

The principal comparison examined by Sapiens was between English monolingual Chicano tutors and

fluent bilingual Chicano tutors working with partial bilingual Chicano tutees. As measured by criterion-referenced instruments, the students tutored by the bilingual tutors showed significantly more growth than those who had monolingual tutors. Sapiens' analysis of the tutoring sessions themselves provides a number of insights that might help explain these results. While tutors were in general much more verbally active than the tutees--the tutors accounted for 67% of all pedagogical moves and 92% of all initiating moves--the tutees with bilingual tutors were considerably more active in their dyads than their counterparts with monolingual tutors; tutees with bilingual tutors made 60% of all tutee moves. This more active role by tutees with bilingual tutors reflects their use of English in the tutoring sessions; it is important to note that fewer than 1% of all moves in the sessions involving bilingual tutors were in Spanish.

Sapiens found no other significant differences: Male and female dyads performed comparably, and there was no evidence in favor of a more structured approach to the tutoring sessions. Similarly, no significant differences on the measures used to assess attitudinal outcomes between tutees with monolingual tutors and those with bilingual tutors were found, despite the fact that the latter had made considerably greater cognitive gains.

The relative effectiveness of peer and teacher evaluation of compositions written by ESL students was the focus of a study by Partridge (1981). She was principally concerned with the value of peer involvement as a technique, rather than with its general contribution to second language acquisition or cognitive growth. Twelve ESL students enrolled in a composition course for foreign students at the University of Hawaii provided the original drafts and rewritten essays for the study. The original drafts and rewritten essays from six writing assignments given over a period of several weeks were chosen by the researcher for rating by a total of six native-speaker judges. Three of the six originals for each student had been corrected by the teacher (the experimenter); the other three originals of

each student had been corrected by one of the students' peers.

Each judge received a total of 72 essays to judge: the originals and the rewrites for all six assignments for each of six students. They were given no information about the identity of the students, whether the essay was an original or a rewrite, or whether peer or teacher correction had been used. The raters used a holistic analytic scale that was regularly used to evaluate compositions in the English Language Institute at the University of Hawaii.

The ratings assigned by the judges were analyzed to determine the relative effectiveness of peer and teacher correction as a means to improve the original drafts of compositions written by ESL students. Results showed that the rewritten versions, taken collectively, were judged to be of significantly higher quality than the original drafts. However, the teacher-corrected original drafts were much more instrumental in this improvement than the peer-corrected drafts. A comparison of each original with its rewritten version showed that each of the three rewrites based on teacher corrections was judged significantly better than its original; only one of the three rewrites based on peer corrections was rated as significantly better than its original. It should be noted, however, that interrater agreement in this experiment, while judged acceptable by the experimenter, was far lower than what is normally expected to indicate adequate interrater reliability.

Partridge administered two questionnaires to 16 students in the composition class from which the teacher- and peer-corrected compositions were taken for her study. Most of the students felt they learned something from correcting their peers' compositions. The majority claimed that they enjoyed having their own compositions corrected by their peers, although students tended to enjoy correcting the compositions of others more than having their own compositions corrected. Nonetheless, the students felt, in general, that their teachers' comments were more useful than their peers'. The

conclusion seemed to be that the students were not so convinced of the value of their peers' corrections that they would rely any more heavily than previously on the advice and recommendations of their fellow language learners.

The Fitz-Gibbon and Reay (1982) study of cross-level (intergrade) tutoring in French (described on pp. 86-88) provides the most striking evidence in support of peer tutoring. The 11 low-achieving fourth-year tutors had scored a mean of 28.9 on the 60-item test that was administered before and after the experiment; the 25 high-achieving fourth-year French students who served as a comparison group had a mean of 44.2. The tutees, who had had no previous formal instruction in French, had a mean score of 5.0 on the same pretest measure.

The treatment consisted of six 30-minute sessions over a period of three weeks. At the end of the period, posttest scores showed several striking results. The tutors themselves had a mean posttest score of 41.4, only slightly less than the mean pretest score of the high-achieving students. The tutees had a mean posttest score of 28.7. In other words, after just six sessions of peer tutoring they had scored, on average, as high as the tutors had originally scored. Even more impressive, perhaps, was the longer-term effect of these sessions:

> Some four months later, having occasionally encountered some of the topics which had been tutored but still having had no formal instruction except from tutors, tutees were given the same test again, unannounced. They achieved an average score of 50% (raw mean, 30.3), showing excellent retention. In short, in six lessons the tutees had learned the materials up to the original level of the tutors, a gain which was still evident four months later. (p. 41)

As Fitz-Gibbon and Reay (1982) point out, it is difficult to measure enjoyment of a peer tutoring

experience. It is even more difficult to assess the longer-term affective and attitudinal effects of such an experience, except indirectly through such measures as attrition rates and statements of willingness to engage in further peer tutoring experiences.

The strongest evidence of an effect of peer tutoring on attitudes, however, comes from the Fitz-Gibbon and Reay experiment. Based on the way tutors and their high-achieving, fourth-year peers (who were in essence a control group) ranked their school subjects in order of preference before and after the tutoring project, the tutoring experience can be seen as having significantly changed the tutors' attitude toward French. By the end of the experience, they ranked French almost exactly as did their high-achieving, fourth-year peers. In fact, the tutors' attitudes toward French improved considerably more than the tutees', lending further support to the argument that peer involvement provides benefits for those who do the tutoring as well as for those who receive it.

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| | |
|---|---|
| A | Background |
| B | Peer involvement in second language learning: General |
| B1 | Peer involvement programs in second language learning: K-8 |
| B2 | Peer involvement programs in second language learning: 9-12 |
| B3 | Peer involvement programs in second language learning: University level and adult education |
| C | Peer involvement programs in foreign language learning: General |
| C1 | Peer involvement programs in foreign language learning: K-8 |
| C2 | Peer involvement programs in foreign language learning: 9-12 |
| C3 | Peer involvement programs in foreign language learning: University level and adult education |
| D | Peer involvement programs: development, administration and evaluation |
| E | Research on peer involvement |
| F | Materials and activities |
| G | Bibliographies |

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